ORIGINES SACRÆ:

OR, A

Rational Account of the Grounds

OF

Christian Faith,

AS TO THE

TRUTH

AND

Divine Authority

OF THE

SCRIPTURES,

And the Matters therein contained.

By EDWARD STILLINGFLEET, D. D.
Dean of St. *Paul's*, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

The Fifth Edition Corrected and Amended.

2 Pet. 1. 16. *For we have not followed cunningly-devised Fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his Majesty.*

Neque religio ulla sine sapientia suscipienda est, nec ulla sine religione probanda sapientia, Lactant. de falſ. relig. cap. 1.

LONDON,
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To his moſt Honoured Friend and Patron,

Sr ROGER BURGOIN, Knight and Baronet.

SIR,

IT *was the early* felicity *of* Moſes, *when expoſed in an* Ark *of* Nilotick papyre, *to be adopted into the* favour *of ſo great a perſonage as the* Daughter *of* Pharaoh: *Such another* Ark *is this vindication of the writings of that* Divine *and* excellent Perſon *expoſed to the world in; and the greateſt ambition of the Author of it, is, to have it received into your* Patronage *and* Protection. *But although the contexture and frame of this Treatiſe be far below the excellency and worth of the ſubject* (*as you know the* Ark *in which* Moſes *was put*, was of bulruſhes daubed with ſlime and pitch) *yet when You pleaſe to caſt your eye on the matter contained in it, you will not think it beneath your* Favour, *and unworthy your* Protection. *For if* Truth *be the greateſt*

Present *which God could bestow, or man receive* (*according to that of* Plutarch, ὡς ἔδιν ἀνθρώπῳ λαβεῖν μεῖζον, ἢ χαρίζεσθαι θεῷ σεμνότερον ἀληθείας) *then certainly those* Truths *deserve our most ready acceptance, which are in themselves of greatest importance, and have the greatest evidence that they come from God. And although I have had the happiness of so near relation to You, and acquaintance with You, as to know how little You need such discourses which tend to settle the* Foundations *of* Religion, *which you have raised so happy a* Superstructure *upon; yet withal I consider what particular* Kindness *the souls of all good men bear to such Designs, whose end is to assert and vindicate the* Truth *and* Excellency *of* Religion. *For those who are enriched themselves with the inestimable Treasure of true Goodness and Piety are far from that envious temper, to think nothing valuable but what they are the sole Possessors of; but such are the most satisfied themselves, when they see others not only admire but enjoy what they have the highest estimation of. Were all who make a shew of Religion in the World really such as they pretend to be, discourses of this nature would be no more seasonable than the commendations of a great* Beauty *to one who is already a passionate admirer of it; but on the contrary we see how common it is for*

De Isid. & Osir.

men

men firſt to throw dirt *in the* face *of Religion, and then perſwade themſelves it is its natural* Complexion; *they repreſent it to themſelves in a* ſhape *leaſt pleaſing to them, and then bring that as a* Plea *why they give it no better entertainment.*

It may juſtly ſeem ſtrange, that true Religion, *which contains nothing in it but what is truly* Noble *and* Generous, *moſt* rational *and* pleaſing *to the* ſpirits *of all* good men, *ſhould yet ſuffer ſo much in its eſteem in the world, through thoſe ſtrange and uncouth* vizards *it is repreſented under: Some accounting the life and practice of it, as it ſpeaks* ſubduing *our* wills *to the* will *of* God (*which is the ſubſtance of all Religion*) *a thing too low and mean for their rank and condition in the World, while others pretend a quarrel againſt the principles of it as unſatisfactory to* Humane reaſon. *Thus* Religion *ſuffers with the* Author *of it between two* Thieves, *and it is hard to define which is moſt injurious to it, that which queſtions the* Principles, *or that which deſpiſeth the* Practice *of it. And nothing certainly will more incline men to believe that we live in an* Age *of* Prodigies, *than that there ſhould be any ſuch in the Chriſtian World who ſhould account it a piece of* Gentility *to deſpiſe* Religion, *and a piece of* Reaſon *to be* Atheiſts. *For if there be any ſuch thing in the World as a true* heighth *and* magnani-

nanimity *of* ſpirit, *if there be any* ſolid reaſon *and depth of* judgment, *they are not only conſiſtent with, but only attaintable by a true* generous ſpirit *of* Religion. *But if we look at that which the looſe and profane World is apt to account the greateſt* gallantry, *we ſhall find it made up of ſuch pitiful* Ingredients, *which any skilful and rational mind will be aſhamed to plead for, much leſs to mention them in competition with true* goodneſs *and unfeigned* piety. *For how eaſie is it to obſerve ſuch who would be accounted the moſt* high *and* gallant ſpirits, *to* quarry *on ſuch mean* preys *which only tend to ſatisfie their brutiſh appetites, or* fleſh *revenge with the* blood *of ſuch who have ſtood in the way of that* aery *title,* Honour! *Or elſe they are ſo little apprehenſive of the inward worth and excellency of humane nature, that they ſeem to envy the* gallantry *of* Peacocks, *and ſtrive to outvy them in the* gaety *of their* Plumes; *ſuch who are, as* Seneca *ſaith,* ad ſimilitudinem parietum ſuorum extrinſecùs culti, *who imitate the* walls *of their* houſes *in the* fairneſs *of the* outſides, *but matter not what* rubbiſh *there lies* within. *The utmoſt of their ambition is to attain* enervatam felicitatem quâ permadeſcunt animi, *ſuch a* felicity *as* evigorates *the ſoul by too long* ſleeping, *it being the nature of all terreſtrial pleaſures that they do* κατηχεῖν καὶ ἀνυγραίνειν

γεδυειν τὸ φρονῦν, *by degrees* conſume reaſon *by* effeminating *and* ſoftning *the* Intellectuals. *Muſt we appeal then to the judgment of* Sardanapalus *concerning the nature of* Felicity, *or enquire of* Apicius *what* temperance *is? or deſire that* Sybarite *to define* Magnanimity, *who* fainted *to ſee a man at* hard labour?

Or doth now the conqueſt *of* paſſions, forgiving injuries, doing good, ſelf-denial, humility, patience under croſſes, *which are the real expreſſions of* piety, *ſpeak nothing more* noble *and* generous *than a* luxurious, malicious, proud, *and* impatient ſpirit? *Is there nothing more* becoming *and* agreeable *to the ſoul of man, in exemplary* Piety, *and a* Holy well ordered Converſation, *than in the* lightneſs *and* vanity (*not to ſay rudeneſs and debaucheries*) *of thoſe whom the world accounts the greateſt* gallants? *Is there nothing more* graceful *and* pleaſing *in the* ſweetneſs, candour, *and* ingenuity *of a truly* Chriſtian temper *and* diſpoſition, *than in the* revengeful, implacable ſpirit *of ſuch whoſe* Honour *lives and is fed by the* Blood *of their enemies? Is it not more truly* honourable *and* glorious *to ſerve that God who commands the World, than to be a ſlave to thoſe* paſſions *and* luſts *which put men upon continual hard ſervice, and* torment *them for it when they have done it? Were there nothing*

thing else to commend Religion to the minds of men, besides that tranquillity and calmness of spirit, that serene and peaceable temper which follows a good conscience where-ever it dwells, it were enough to make men welcome that guest which brings such good entertainment with it. Whereas the amazements, horrours, and anxieties of mind, which at one time or other haunt such who prostitute their Consciences to a violation of the Laws of God, and the rules of rectified reason, may be enough to perswade any rational person, that impiety is the greatest folly, and irreligion madness. It cannot be then but matter of great pity to consider that any persons whose birth and education hath raised them above the common people of the World, should be so far their own enemies, as to observe the Fashion more than the rules of Religion, and to study complements more than themselves, and read Romances more than the Sacred Scriptures, which alone are able to make them wise to salvation.

But, Sir, I need not mention these things to You, unless it be to let You see the excellency of your choice, in preferring true Vertue and Piety above the Ceremony and Grandeur of the World. Go on, Sir, to value and measure true Religion not by the uncertain measures of the World, but by the infallible dictates of God himself in his sacred Oracles.

cles. *Were it not for theſe, what certain foundation could there be for our* Faith *to ſtand on? and who durſt venture his ſoul, as to its future condition, upon any authority leſs than the* infallible veracity *of God himſelf? What certain directions for practice ſhould we have, what rule to judge of opinions by, had not God out of his* infinite goodneſs *provided and preſerved this authentick* inſtrument *of his* Will *to the World? What a ſtrange* Religion *would* Chriſtianity *ſeem, ſhould we frame the Model of it from any other thing than the* Word *of God? Without all controverſie the* diſeſteem *of the* Scriptures *upon any pretence whatſoever, is the* decay *of* Religion, *and through many windings and turnings leads men at laſt into the very depth of* Atheiſm. *Whereas the frequent and ſerious converſing with the mind of God in his* Word, *is incomparably uſeful, not only for keeping up in us a true* Notion *of* Religion (*which is eaſily miſtaken, when men look upon the* face *of it in any other glaſs than that of the Scriptures*) *but likewiſe for maintaining a powerful ſenſe of* Religion *in the ſouls of men, and a due valuation of it, whatever its eſteem or entertainment be in the World. For though the true genuine ſpirit of* Chriſtianity (*which is known by the* purity *and* peaceableneſs *of it*) *ſhould grow never ſo much out of credit with the World; yet*

none who heartily believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and that the matters revealed therein are infallibly true, will ever have the leſs eſtimation of it. It muſt be confeſſed that the credit of Religion hath much ſuffered in the Age we live in through the vain pretences of many to it, who have only acted a part in it for the ſake of ſome private intereſts of their own. And it is the uſual Logick of Atheiſts, crimine ab uno Diſce omnes; if there be any hypocrites, all who make ſhew of Religion, are ſuch, on which account the Hypocriſie of one Age makes way for the Atheiſm of the next. But how unreaſonable and unjuſt that imputation is, there needs not much to diſcover, unleſs it be an argument there are no true men in the World, becauſe there are ſo many Apes which imitate them; or that there are no Jewels, becauſe there are ſo many Counterfeits. And bleſſed be God, our Age is not barren of inſtances of real goodneſs and unaffected piety; there being ſome ſuch generous ſpirits as dare love Religion without the dowry of Intereſt, and manifeſt their affection to it in the plain dreſs of the Scriptures, without the paint and ſet-offs which are added to it by the ſeveral contending parties of the Chriſtian World. Were there more ſuch noble ſpirits of Religion in our Age, Atheiſm would want one of the greateſt

Pleas

Pleas *which it now makes againſt the* Truth *of* Religion; *for nothing enlarges more the Gulf of* Atheiſm, *than that* μέγα χάσμα, *that* wide paſſage *which lies between the* Faith *and* Lives *of men pretending to be* Chriſtians. *I muſt needs ſay there is nothing ſeems more ſtrange and unaccountable to me, than that the* Practice *of the unqueſtionable* duties *of* Chriſtianity *ſhould be put out of* Countenance, *or ſlighted by any who* own, profeſs, *and* contend *for the* Principles *of it. Can the profeſſion of that be* honourable, *whoſe* practice *is not?* If the principles be true, why are they not practiſed? If they be not true, why are they profeſſed?

You ſee, Sir, *to what an unexpected length my deſire to vindicate the* Honour *as well as* Truth *of* Religion, *hath drawn out this preſent addreſs. But I may ſooner hope for your pardon in it, than if I had ſpent ſo much paper after the uſual manner of* Dedications, *in repreſenting* You *to* Your ſelf *or the* World. *Sir, I know* You *have too much of* that *I have been commending, to delight in* Your *own deſerved* praiſes, *much leſs in* flatteries, *which ſo* benign *a ſubject might eaſily make ones pen* run over *in. And therein I might not much have digreſſed from my deſign, ſince I know few more exemplary for that rare* mixture *of true* piety,

 and

and the higheſt civility *together, in whom that in-eſtimable* jewel *of* Religion *is placed in a moſt ſweet, affable, and obliging temper. But although none will be more ready on any occaſion with all* gratitude *to acknowledge the great obligations* You *have laid upon me; yet I am ſo far ſenſible of the common vanity of* Epiſtles Dedicatory, *that I cannot ſo heartily comply with them in any thing, as in my hearty prayer to Almighty God for your* good *and* welfare, *and in ſubſcribing my ſelf,*

Sir,

Your moſt humble and

June 5. 1662. affectionate ſervant,

Ed. Stillingfleet.

THE

THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

IT is neither to ſatisfie the importunity of friends, nor to prevent falſe copies (which and ſuch like excuſes I know are expected in uſual Prefaces) that I have adventured abroad this following Treatiſe: but it is out of a juſt reſentment of the affronts and indignities which have been caſt on Religion; by ſuch, who account it a matter of judgment to disbelieve the Scriptures, and a piece of wit to diſpute themſelves out of the poſſibility of being happy in another world: When yet the more acute and ſubtile their arguments are, the greater their ſtrength is againſt themſelves, it being impoſſible there ſhould be ſo much wit and ſubtilty in the ſouls of men, were they not of a more excellent nature than they imagine them to be. And how contradictious is it for ſuch perſons to be ambitious of being cried up for wit and reaſon, whoſe deſign is to degrade the rational

tional ſoul ſo far below her ſelf, as to make her become like the beaſts that periſh! If now the weight and conſequence of the ſubject, and the too great ſeaſonableneſs of it (if the common fame of the large ſpread of Atheiſm among us be true) be not ſufficient Apology for the publiſhing this Book, I am reſolved rather to undergo thy cenſure, than be beholding to any other. The intendment therefore of this Preface is only to give a brief account of the ſcope, deſign, and method of the following Books, although the View of the Contents of the Chapters might ſufficiently acquaint thee with it. How far I have been either from tranſcribing, or a deſign to excuſs out of the hands of their admirers, the ſeveral writings on the behalf of Religion in general, or Chriſtianity in particular (eſpecially *Morny*, *Grotius*, *Amyraldus*, &c.) may eaſily appear by comparing what is contained in their Books and this together. Had I not thought ſomething might be ſaid, if not more fully and rationally, yet more ſuitably to the preſent temper of this Age than what is already written by them, thou hadſt not been troubled with this Preface, much leſs with the whole Book. But as the tempers and Genius's of Ages and Times alter, ſo do the arms and weapons which Atheiſts imploy againſt Religion; the moſt popular pretences of the Atheiſts of our Age, have been the irreconcilableneſs of the account of Times in Scripture, with that of the learned and ancient Heathen Nations; the inconſiſtency of the belief of the Scriptures with the principles of reaſon: and the account which may be given of the Origin of things from principles of Philoſophy without the Scriptures: Theſe three therefore I have particularly ſet my ſelf againſt,

againſt, and directed againſt each of them a ſeveral Book. In the firſt I have manifeſted that there is no ground of credibility in the account of ancient times given by any Heathen Nations different from the Scriptures, which I have with ſo much care and diligence enquired into, that from thence we may hope to hear no more of men before *Adam* to ſalve the Authority of the Scriptures by, which yet was intended only as a deſign to undermine them; but I have not thought the frivolous pretences of the Author of that Hypotheſis worth particular mentioning, ſuppoſing it ſufficient to give a clear account of things without particular citation of Authors, where it was not of great concernment for underſtanding the thing it ſelf. In the ſecond Book I have undertaken to give a rational account of the grounds, why we are to believe thoſe ſeveral perſons, who in ſeveral ages were imployed to reveal the mind of God to the world, and with greater particularity than hath yet been uſed, I have inſiſted on the perſons of *Moſes*, and the Prophets, our Saviour and his Apoſtles, and in every of them manifeſted the rational evidences on which they were to be believed, not only by the men of their own Age, but by thoſe of ſucceeding Generations. In the third Book I have inſiſted on the matters themſelves which are either ſuppoſed by, or revealed in the Scriptures; and have therein not only manifeſted the certainty of the foundations of all Religion which lie in the Being of God and Immortality of the ſoul, but the undoubted truth of thoſe particular accounts concerning the Origin of the Univerſe, of Evil, and of Nations, which were moſt liable to the Atheiſts exceptions, and have therein conſidered all the pretences of Philoſophy

loſophy ancient or modern, which have ſeemed to contradict any of them; to which (*mantiſſæ loco*) I have added the evidence of Scripture-Hiſtory in the remainders of it in Heathen Mythology, and concluded all with a diſcourſe of the excellency of the Scriptures. Thus having given a brief view of the deſign and method of the whole, I ſubmit it to every free and unprejudiced judgment. All the favour then I ſhall requeſt of thee, is, to read ſeriouſly, and judge impartially; and then I doubt not but thou wilt ſee as much reaſon for Religion as I do.

THE

THE CONTENTS.

BOOK I.

CHAP. I.

The obſcurity and defect of Ancient Hiſtory.

THE knowledge of truth proved to be the moſt natural perfection of the rational ſoul; yet error often miſtaken for truth; the accounts of it. Want of diligence in its ſearch, the mixture of truth and falſhood: Thence comes either rejecting truth for the error's ſake, or embracing the error for the truth's ſake; the firſt inſtanced in Heathen Philoſophers, the ſecond in vulgar Heathen. Of Philoſophical Atheiſm, and the grounds of it. The Hiſtory of Antiquity very obſcure. The queſtion ſtated where the true Hiſtory of ancient times is to be found, in Heathen Hiſtories, or only in Scripture? The want of credibility in Heathen Hiſtories aſſerted and proved by the general defect for want of timely records among Heathen Nations; the reaſon of it ſhewed from the firſt Plantations of the World. The manner of them diſcovered. The Original of Civil Government. Of Hieroglyphicks. The uſe of letters among the Greeks no elder than Cadmus, *his time enquired into, no elder than* Joſhua, *the learning brought into Greece by him.* page 1

CHAP. II.

Of the *Phœnician* and *Ægyptian* Hiſtory.

The particular defect in the Hiſtory of the moſt learned Heathen Nations. Firſt the Phœnicians. *Of* Sanchoniathon, *his Antiquity, and fidelity. Of* Jerom-baal, Baal-Berith. *The Antiquity of* Tyre. Scaliger *vindicated againſt* Bochartus Abibalus. *The vanity of* Phœnician *Theology. The imitation of it by the* Gnoſticks. *Of the* Ægyptian *Hiſtory. The Antiquity and Authority of* Hermes Triſmegiſtus. *Of his Inſcriptions on Pillars, tranſcribed by* Manetho. *His Fabulouſneſs thence diſcovered.* Terra Seriadica. *Of* Seth's *Pillars in* Joſephus, *and an account whence they are taken.* pag. 23

CHAP. III.

Of the *Chaldean* Hiſtory.

The conteſt of Antiquity among Heathen Nations, and the ways of deciding it. Of the Chaldean *Aſtrology, and the foundation of Judicial Aſtrology. Of the* Zabii, *their Founder, who they were, no other than the old* Chaldees. *Of* Beroſus *and his Hiſtory. An account of the fabulous* Dynaſties *of* Beroſus *and* Manetho. *From the Tranſlation of the Scripture hiſtory into Greek in the time of* Ptolomy. *Of that Tranſlation and the time of it. Of* Demetrius Phalereus. Scaliger's *arguments anſwered.* Manetho *writ after the Septuagint, proved againſt* Kircher; *his arguments anſwered. Of Rabbinical and Arabick Authors, and their little credit in matter of hiſtory. The time of* Beroſus *enquired into, his writing co-temporary with* Philadelphus. pag. 37

CHAP. IV.

The defect of the *Græcian* Hiſtory.

That manifeſted by three evident arguments of it. 1. *The fabulouſneſs of the Poetical age of* Greece. *The Antiquity of Poetry Of* Orpheus *and the ancient Poets. Whence the Poetical Fables borrowed. The advancement of Poetry and Idolatry together in* Greece. *The different cenſures of* Strabo *and* Eratoſthenes *concerning the Poetical age of* Greece, *and the reaſons of them.* 2. *The eldeſt Hiſtorians of* Greece *are of ſuſpected credit. Of* Damaſtes, Ariſteus, *and others; of the moſt of their eldeſt Hiſtorians we have nothing left but their names, of others only the ſubjects they treated of, and ſome fragments.* 3. *Thoſe that are extant, either confeſs their ignorance of eldeſt times, or plainly diſcover it. Of the firſt ſort are* Thucydides *and* Plutarch; *ſeveral evidences of the Græcians Ignorance of the true original of Nations. Of* Herodotus *and his miſtakes; the Greeks ignorance in Geography diſcovered, and thence their inſufficiency as to an account of ancient hiſtory.* pag. 52

CHAP. V.

The general uncertainty of Heathen Chronology.

The want of credibility in Heathen Hiſtory further proved from the uncertainty and confuſion in their accounts of ancient times; that diſcovered by the uncertain form of their years. An enquiry into the different forms of the Ægyptian years, the firſt of thirty days, the ſecond of four Months; of both Inſtances given in the Ægyptian hiſtory. Of the Chaldean accounts, and the firſt Dynaſties mentioned by Beroſus, *how they may be reduced to probability. Of the Ægyptian Dynaſties. Of* Manetho. *Reaſons of accounting them fabulous, becauſe not atteſted by any credible authority, and rejected by the beſt Hiſtorians. The opinion of* Scaliger *and* Voſſius, *concerning their being co-temporary propounded and rejected*

with reasons against it. Of the ancient division of Ægypt *into* Nomi *or Provinces, and the number of them against* Vossius *and* Kircher. pag. 68

CHAP. VI.

The uncertain Epocha's of Heathen Chronology.

An account given of the defect of Chronology in the eldest times. Of the Solar year among the Ægyptians, the original of the Epacts, the antiquity of Intercalation among them. Of the several Canicular years; the difference between Scaliger *and* Petavius *considered. The certain* Epocha's *of the* Ægyptian *history no elder than* Nabonasser. *Of the Grecian accounts. The fabulousness of the Heroical age of* Greece. *Of the ancient Grecian Kingdoms. The beginning of the Olympiads. The uncertain Origins of the Western Nations. Of the Latin Dynasties. The different* Palilia *of* Rome. *The uncertain reckoning* Ab U. C. *Of impostures as to ancient histories. Of* Annius, Inghiramus, *and others. Of the characters used by Heathen Priests. No sacred characters among the Jews. The partiality and inconsistency of Heathen histories with each other. From all which the want of credibility in them as to an account of ancient times is clearly demonstrated.* pag. 83

BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

The certainty of the Writings of *Moses.*

In order to the proving the truth of Scripture-history, several Hypotheses laid down. The first concerns the reasonableness of preserving the ancient History of the world in some certain Records, from the importance of the things, and the inconveniences of mere tradition or constant Revelation. The second

cond concerns the certainty that the Records under Moſes *his name, were undoubtedly his. The certainty of a matter of fact enquired into in general, and proved as to this particular by univerſal conſent, and ſetling a Common-wealth upon his Laws. The impoſſibility of an Impoſture as to the writings of* Moſes *demonſtrated. The pleas to the contrary largely anſwered.* pag. 99

CHAP. II.

Moſes his certain knowledge of what he writ.

The third Hypotheſis concerns the certainty of the matter of Moſes *his hiſtory; that gradually proved: Firſt,* Moſes *his knowledge cleared by his education, and experience, and certain information. His education in the wiſdom of* Ægypt; *what that was. The old* Ægyptian *learning enquired into, the conveniencies for it. Of the* Ægyptian *Prieſts.* Moſes *reckoned among them for his knowledge. The Mathematical, Natural, Divine, and Moral learning of* Ægypt: *their Political wiſdom moſt conſiderable. The advantage of* Moſes *above the Greek Philoſophers, as to wiſdom and reaſon.* Moſes *himſelf an eye-witneſs of moſt of his hiſtory: the certain uninterrupted tradition of the other part among the Jews, manifeſted by rational evidence.* pag. 111

CHAP. III.

Moſes his fidelity and integrity proved.

Moſes *conſidered as an Hiſtorian, and as a Law-giver; his fidelity in both proved: clear evidences that he had no intent to deceive in his Hiſtory, freedom from private intereſt, impartiality in his relations, plainneſs and perſpicuity of ſtile. As a Law-giver, he came armed with Divine authority, which being the main thing, is fixed on to be fully proved from his actions and writings. The power of miracles the great evidence of Divine revelation. Two grand queſtions propounded. In what caſe miracles may be expected and how known to be true. No neceſſity of a conſtant power of miracles in a Church:*

a Church: Two Cases alone wherein they may be expected. When any thing comes as a Law from God, and when a Divine Law is to be repealed. The necessity of miracles in those cases as an evidence of Divine revelation asserted. Objections answered. No use of miracles when the doctrine is setled and owned by miracles in the first revelation. No need of miracles in reformation of a Church. pag. 126

CHAP. IV.

The fidelity of the Prophets succeeding *Moses.*

An order of Prophets to succeed Moses, *by God's own appointment in the Law of* Moses. *The Schools of the Prophets, the original and institution of them. The Cities of the Levites. The occasion of their first institution. The places of the Schools of the Prophets, and the tendency of the institution there to a Prophetical office. Of the Musick used in the Schools of the Prophets. The Roman Assamenta, and the Greek Hymns in their solemn worship. The two sorts of Prophets among the Jews, Leiger and Extraordinary. Ordinary Prophets taken out of the Schools, proved by* Amos *and* Saul. pag. 139

CHAP. V.

The tryal of Prophetical Doctrine.

Rules of trying Prophets established in the Law of Moses. *The punishment of pretenders. The several sorts of false Prophets. The case of the Prophet at* Bethel *discussed. The tryal of false Prophets belonging to the great Sanhedrin. The particular rules whereby the Doctrine of Prophets was judged. The proper notion of a Prophet, not foretelling future contingencies, but having immediate Divine revelation. Several principles laid down for clearing the doctrine of the Prophets. 1. That immediate dictates of natural light are not to be the measure of Divine revelation. Several grounds for Divine revelation from natural light. 2. Whatever is directly repugnant to the dictates of nature, cannot be of Divine revelation.*

lation. 3. *No Divine revelation doth contradict a Divine positive Law without sufficient evidence of God's intention to repeal that Law.* 4. *Divine revelation in the Prophets was not to be measured by the words of the Law, but by the intention and reason of it. The Prophetical office a kind of Chancery to the Law of* Moses. pag. 154

CHAP. VI.

The tryal of Prophetical Predictions and Miracles.

The great difficulty of the trying the truth of Prophetical predictions from Jerem. 18 7, 8, &c. *Some general* Hypotheses *premised for the clearing of it. The first concerns the ground why predictions are accounted an evidence of Divine revelation. Three Consectaries drawn thence. The second, the manner of God's revelation of his will to the minds of the Prophets. Of the several degrees of Prophecy. The third is, that God did not always reveal the internal purposes of his will unto the true Prophets. The grand question propounded how it may be known when predictions express God's decrees, and when only the series of causes. For the first, several rules laid down.* 1. *When the prediction is confirmed by a present miracle.* 2. *when the things foretold exceed the probability of second causes.* 3. *When confirmed by God's oath.* 4. *When the blessings foretold are purely spiritual. Three rules for interpreting the Prophecies which respect the state of things under the Gospel.* 5. *When all circumstances are foretold.* 6. *When many Prophets in several ages agree in the same predictions. Predictions do not express God's unalterable purposes, when they only contain comminations of judgments, or are predictions of temporal blessings. The case of the Ninevites,* Hezekiah, *and others opened. Of repentance in God, what it implies. The Jewish objections about predictions of temporal blessings answered. In what cases miracles were expected from the Prophets, when they were to confirm the truth of their religion. Instanced in the Prophet at* Bethel, Elijah, Elisha, *and of* Moses *himself; Whose divine authority that it was proved by miracles, is demonstrated against the modern Jews, and their pretences answered.* pag. 165

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The eternity of the Law of *Moſes* diſcuſſed.

The ſecond caſe wherein miracles may be expected, when a Divine poſitive Law is to be repealed, and another way of worſhip eſtabliſhed inſtead of it. The poſſibility in general of a repeal of a Divine Law aſſerted: the particular caſe of the Law of Moſes *diſputed againſt the Jews; the matter of that Law proved not to be immutably obligatory; becauſe the ceremonial precepts were required not for themſelves, but for ſome further end; that proved from* Maimonides *his confeſſion: the precepts of the Ceremonial Law frequently diſpenſed with while the Law was in force. Of the Paſſover of* Hezekiah, *and ſeveral other inſtances. It is not inconſiſtent with the wiſdom of God to repeal ſuch an eſtabliſhed Law.* Abravanel's *arguments anſwered. Of the perfection of the Law of* Moſes, *compared with the Goſpel. Whether God hath ever declared he would never repeal the Law of* Moſes. *Of adding to the precepts. Of the expreſſions ſeeming to imply the perpetuity of the Law of* Moſes. *Reaſons aſſigned why thoſe expreſſions are uſed, though perpetuity be not implied. The Law of* Moſes *not built upon immutable reaſon, becauſe many particular precepts were founded upon particular occaſions, as the cuſtoms of the* Zabii; *many ceremonial precepts thence deduced out of* Maimonides; *and becauſe ſuch a ſtate of things was foretold, with which the obſervation of the Ceremonial Law would be inconſiſtent. That largely diſcovered from the Prophecies of the old Teſtament.* pag. 191

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

General Hypotheſes concerning the Truth of the Doctrine of Chriſt.

The great prejudice againſt our Saviour among Jews and Heathens, was the meanneſs of his appearance. The difference of the miracles at the delivery of the Law and Goſpel. Some general Hypotheſes to clear the ſubſerviency of miracles to the Doctrine of Chriſt. 1. *That where the truth of a doctrine depends not on evidence, but authority, the only way to prove the truth of the Doctrine, is to prove the Teſtimony of the revealer to be infallible. Things may be true which depend not on evidence of the things. What that is, and on what it depends. The uncertainty of natural knowledge. The exiſtence of God, the foundation of all certainty. The certainty of matters of faith proved from the ſame principle. Our knowledge of any thing ſuppoſeth ſomething incomprehenſible. The certainty of faith as great as that of knowledge; the grounds of it ſtronger. The conſiſtency of rational evidence with faith. Yet objects of faith exceed reaſon; the abſurdities following the contrary opinion. The uncertainty of that which is called reaſon. Philoſophical dictates no ſtandard of reaſon. Of tranſubſtantiation and ubiquity, &c. why rejected as contrary to reaſon. The foundation of faith in matters above reaſon. Which is an infallible Teſtimony; that there are ways to know which is infallible, proved.* 2. *Hypoth. A Divine Teſtimony the moſt infallible. The reſolution of faith into God's veracity as its formal object.* 3. *Hypoth. A Divine Teſtimony may be known, though God ſpeak not immediately. Of inſpiration among the Jews, and Divination among the Heathens.* 4. *Hypoth. The evidences of a Divine Teſtimony muſt be clear and certain. Of the common motives of faith, and the obligation to faith ariſing from them. The original of Infidelity.* p. 211

CHAP. IX.

The rational evidence of the Truth of Christian Religion from Miracles.

The possibility of miracles appears from God and providence; the evidence of a Divine Testimony by them. God alone can really alter the course of nature. The Devil's power of working miracles considered. Of Simon Magus, Apollonius. *The cures in the Temple of* Æsculapius *at* Rome, *&c. God never works miracles, but for some particular end. The particular reasons of the miracles of Christ. The repealing the Law of* Moses, *which had been setled by miracles. Why Christ checked the Pharisees for demanding a sign, when himself appeals to his miracles. The power of Christ's miracles on many who did not throughly believe. Christ's miracles made it evident that he was the Messias, because the predictions were fulfilled in him. Why* John Baptist *wrought no miracles. Christ's miracles necessary for the overthrow of the Devil's Kingdom. Of the Demoniacks and Lunaticks in the Gospel, and in the Primitive Church. The power of the name of Christ over them largely proved by several Testimonies. The evidence thence of a Divine power in Christ. Of counterfeit dispossessions. Of miracles wrought among Infidels. Of the future state of the Church. The necessity of the miracles of Christ, as to the propagation of Christian Religion: that proved from the condition of the publishers, and the success of the Doctrine. The Apostles knew the hazard of their imployment, before they entred on it. The boldness and resolution of the Apostles notwithstanding this, compared with heathen Philosophers. No motive could carry the Apostles through their imployment, but the truth of their Doctrine, not seeking the honour, profit or pleasure of the world. The Apostles evidence of the truth of their doctrine lay in being eye-witnesses of our Saviour's miracles and resurrection. That attested by themselves; their sufficiency thence for preaching the Gospel. Of the nature of the doctrine of the Gospel; contrariety of it to natural inclinations. Strange success of it, notwithstanding it came not with humane*

humane power: No Christian Emperor, till the Gospel universally preached. The weakness and simplicity of the instruments which preached the Gospel. From all which the great evidence of the power of miracles is proved. pag. 235

CHAP. X.

The difference of true miracles from false.

The unreasonableness of rejecting the evidence from miracles, because of impostures. That there are certain rules of distinguishing true miracles from false, and Divine from diabolical, proved from God's intention in giving a power of miracles, and the providence of God in the world. The inconvenience of taking away the rational grounds of faith and placing it on self-evidence. Of the self-evidence of the Scriptures, and the insufficiency of that for resolving the question about the authority of the Scriptures. Of the pretended miracles of Impostors and false Christs, as Barchochebas, David el-David, *and others. The rules whereby to judge true miracles from false. 1. True Divine miracles are wrought to confirm a Divine testimony. No miracles necessary for the certain conveyance of a Divine Testimony; proved from the evidences that the Scriptures could not be corrupted. 2. No miracles Divine which contradict Divine revelation. Of Popish miracles. 3. Divine miracles leave Divine effects on those who believe them. Of the miracles of* Simon Magus. *4. Divine miracles tend to the overthrow of the Devil's power in the world: the antipathy of the doctrine of Christ to the devil's designs in the world. 5. The distinction of true miracles from others, from the circumstances and manner of their operation. The miracles of Christ compared with those of the Heathen Gods. 6. God makes it evident to all impartial judgments that Divine miracles exceed created power. This manifested from the imparallell'd miracles of* Moses *and our Saviour. From all which the rational evidence of Divine revelation is manifested, as to the persons whom God imploys to teach the world.* p. 312

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

Of the Being of God.

The Principles of all Religion lie in the Being of God and immortality of the ſoul: from them the neceſſity of a particular Divine revelation rationally deduced; the method laid down for proving the Divine authority of the Scriptures. Why Moſes *doth not prove the Being of God, but ſuppoſe it. The notion of a Deity very conſonant to reaſon. Of the nature of Idea's, and particularly of the Idea of God. How we can form an Idea of an infinite Being. How far ſuch an Idea argues exiſtence. The great unreaſonableneſs of Atheiſm demonſtrated. Of the Hypotheſes of Ariſtotelian and Epicurean Atheiſts. The Atheiſts pretences examined and refuted. Of the nature of the arguments whereby we prove there is a God. Of univerſal conſent and the evidence of that to prove a Deity and immortality of ſouls. Of neceſſity of exiſtence implied in the notion of God, and how far that proves the Being of God. The order of the world and uſefulneſs of the parts of it, and eſpecially of man's body, an argument of a Deity. Some higher principle proved to be in the world than matter and motion. The nature of the ſoul, and poſſibility of its ſubſiſting after death. Strange appearances in nature not ſolvable by the power of imagination.* pag. 337

CHAP. II.

Of the Origin of the Univerſe.

The neceſſity of the belief of the creation of the world in order to the truth of Religion. Of the ſeveral Hypotheſes of the Philoſophers who contradict Moſes: *with a particular examination of them. The ancient tradition of the world conſonant to* Moſes: *proved from the Ionick Philoſophy of* Thales, *and*

and the Italick of Pythagoras. *The Pythagorick Cabala rather Ægyptian than Moſaick. Of the fluid matter which was the material principle of the Univerſe. Of the Hypotheſes of the eternity of the world aſſerted by* Ocellus Lucanus, *and* Ariſtotle. *The weakneſs of the foundations on which that opinion is built. Of the manner of forming principles of Philoſophy. The poſſibility of creation proved. No arguing from the preſent ſtate of the world againſt its beginning, ſhewed from* Maimonides. *The Platoniſts arguments from the goodneſs of God for the eternity of the world anſwered. Of the Stoical Hypotheſes of the eternity of matter; whether reconcilable with the text of* Moſes. *Of the opinions of* Plato *and* Pythagoras *concerning the præ-exiſtence of matter to the formation of the world. The contradiction of the eternity of matter to the nature and attributes of God. Of the Atomical Hypotheſis of the Origin of the Univerſe. The World could not be produced by a caſual concourſe of Atoms proved from the nature and motion of* Epicurus *his Atoms, and the Phænomena of the Univerſe, eſpecially the production and nature of Animals. Of the* Carteſian *Hypotheſis, that it cannot ſalve the Origin of the Univerſe without a Deity giving motion to matter.* pag. 394

CHAP. III.

Of the Origin of Evil.

Of the Being of Providence. Epicurus *his arguments againſt it refuted. The neceſſity of the belief of Providence in order to Religion. Providence proved from a conſideration of the nature of God and the things of the world. Of the Spirit of nature. The great objections againſt Providence propounded. The firſt concerns the Origin of evil. God cannot be the author of ſin if the Scriptures be true. The account which the Scriptures give of the fall of man, doth not charge God with man's fault. God's power to govern man by Laws, though he gives no particular reaſon of every Poſitive precept. The reaſon of God's creating man with freedom of will, largely ſhewed from* Simplicius; *and the true account of the Origin of evil. God's permitting the fall makes him not the author of it. The account*

count which the Scriptures give of the Origin of evil, compared with that of Heathen Philoſophers. The antiquity of the opinion of aſcribing the Origin of evil to an evil principle. Of the judgment of the Perſians, Ægyptians *and others about it. Of Manichæiſm. The opinion of the ancient Greek Philoſophers*; *of* Pythagoras, Plato, *the* Stoicks; *the Origin of evil not from the neceſſity of matter. The remainders of the hiſtory of the fall among the Heathens. Of the malignity of* Dæmons. *Providence vindicated as to the ſufferings of the good, and impunity of bad men. An account of both from natural light, manifeſted by* Seneca, Plutarch, *and others.* pag. 441

CHAP. IV.

Of the Origin of Nations.

All mankind derived from Adam, *if the Scriptures be true. The contrary ſuppoſition an introduction to Atheiſm. The truth of the Hiſtory of the Flood. The poſſibility of an univerſal deluge proved. The Flood univerſal as to mankind, whether univerſal as to the Earth and Animals*; *no neceſſity of aſſerting either. Yet ſuppoſing it, the poſſibility of it demonſtrated without creation of new waters. Of the Fountains of the deep. The proportion which the height of Mountains bears to the Diameter of the Earth. No Mountains much above three mile perpendicular. Of the Origin of Fountains. The opinion of* Ariſtotle *and others concerning it diſcuſſed. The true account of them from the vapours ariſing from the maſs of ſubterraneous waters. Of the Capacity of the Ark for receiving the Animals, from* Buteo *and others. The truth of the deluge from the Teſtimony of Heathen Nations. Of the propagation of Nations from* Noah's *poſterity. Of the beginning of the* Aſſyrian *Empire. The multiplication of mankind after the Flood. Of the Chronology of the LXX. Of the time between the Flood and* Abraham, *and the advantages of it. Of the pretence of ſuch Nations, who called themſelves Aborigines. A diſcourſe concerning the firſt Plantation of* Greece, *the common opinion propounded and rejected. The* Hellens *not the firſt Inhabitants of* Greece, *but the* Pelaſgi. *The large ſpread of them over the parts of* Greece; *Of their language different from*

from the Greeks. *Whence these* Pelasgi *came*; *that* Phaleg *was the* Pelasgus *of* Greece, *and the leader of that Colony, proved from* Epiphanius: *the language of the* Pelasgi *in* Greece *Oriental: thence an account given of the many Hebrew words in the Greek language, and the remainders of the Eastern languages in the Islands of* Greece, *both which not from the* Phœnicians *as* Bochartus *thinks, but from the old* Pelasgi. *Of the ground of the affinity between the* Jews *and* Lacedæmonians. *Of the peopling of* America. pag. 497

CHAP. V.

Of the Origin of the Heathen Mythology.

That there were some remainders of the ancient history of the World preserved in the several Nations after the dispersion. How it came to be corrupted: by decay of knowledge, increase of Idolatry, confusion of languages. An enquiry into the cause of that. Difficulties against the common opinion that languages were confounded at Babel. *Those difficulties cleared. Of the fabulousness of Poets. The particular ways whereby the Heathen Mythology arose. Attributing the general history of the World to their own Nation. The corruption of* Hebraisms. *Alteration of names. Ambiguity of sence in the Oriental languages. Attributing the actions of many to one person, as in* Jupiter, Bacchus, *&c. The remainders of Scripture-history among the Heathens. The names of God,* Chaos, *formation of man among the* Phœnicians. *Of* Adam *among the* Germans, Ægyptians, Cilicians. Adam *under* Saturn. Cain *among the* Phœnicians. Tubal-Cain *and* Jubal *under* Vulcan *and* Apollo. Naamah *under* Minerva. Noah *under* Saturn, Janus, Prometheus *and* Bacchus. Noah's *three sons under* Jupiter, Neptune, *and* Pluto. Canaan *under* Mercury, Nimrod *under* Bacchus, Magog *under* Prometheus. *Of* Abraham *and* Isaac *among the* Phœnicians. Jacob's *service under* Apollo's. *The* βαιτύλια *from* Bethel. Joseph *under* Apis. Moses *under* Bacchus. Joshua *under* Hercules. Balaam *under the old* Silenus. pag. 538

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Excellency of the Scriptures.

Concerning matters of pure divine revelation in Scripture: the terms of Salvation only contained therein. The ground of the diſeſteem of the Scriptures is tacite unbelief. The Excellency of the Scriptures manifeſted as to the matters which God hath revealed therein. The Excellency of the diſcoveries of God's nature which are in Scripture. Of the goodneſs and love of God in Chriſt. The ſuitableneſs of thoſe diſcoveries of God to our natural notions of a Deity. The neceſſity of God's making known himſelf to us in order to the regulating our conceptions of him. The Scriptures give the fulleſt account of the ſtate of men's ſouls, and the corruptions which are in them. The only way of pleaſing God diſcovered in Scriptures. The Scriptures contain matters of greateſt myſteriouſneſs, and moſt univerſal ſatisfaction to men's minds. The Excellency of the manner wherein things are revealed in Scriptures, in regard of clearneſs, authority, purity, uniformity, and perſuaſiveneſs. The Excellency of the Scriptures as a rule of life. The nature of the duties of Religion and the reaſonableneſs of them. The greatneſs of the encouragements to Religion contained in the Scriptures. The great Excellency of the Scriptures, as containing in them the Covenant of Grace in order to man's Salvation. p. 559

ORIGINES

ORIGINES SACRÆ:

The Truth of SCRIPTURE-HISTORY Asserted.

BOOK I.

CHAP. I.

The obscurity and defect of Ancient History.

The knowledge of truth proved to be the most natural perfection of the rational soul; yet error often mistaken for truth, the accounts of it. Want of diligence in its search, the mixture of truth and falshood: Thence comes either rejecting truth for the error's sake, or embracing the error for the truth's sake; the first instanced in Heathen Philosophers, the second in vulgar Heathen. Of Philosophical Atheism, and the grounds of it. The History of Antiquity very obscure. The question stated where the true History of ancient times to be found, in Heathen Histories, or only in Scripture? The want of credibility in Heathen Histories asserted and proved by the general defect for want of timely records among Heathen Nations; the reason of it shewed from the first Plantations of the World. The manner of them discovered. The Original of Civil Government. Of Hieroglyphicks. The use of letters among the Greeks no elder than Cadmus, *his time enquired into, no elder than* Joshua, *the learning brought into Greece by him.*

ENquiries after *truth* have that *peculiar commendation* above all other *designs*, that they come on *purpose* to *gratifie* the most noble *faculty* of our *souls*, and do most immediately tend to *re-advance* the highest *perfection* of our *rational beings*. For all our most laudable endeavours after knowledge now, are only the *gathering up* some *scattered fragments* of what was once an *entire Fabrick*, and the *recovery* of *some precious Jewels* which *Sect.* 1.

 were

were *loſt* out of ſight, and *ſunk* in the *ſhipwrack* of *humane nature*. That ſaying of *Plato*, *that all knowledge is remembrance, and all ignorance forgetfulneſs*, is a *certain* and *undoubted* truth, if by *forgetfulneſs* be meant the *loſs*, and by *remembrance* the *recovery* of thoſe *notions* and *conceptions* of things which the *mind* of man once had in its pure and primitive *ſtate*, wherein the *underſtanding* was the trueſt *Microcoſm*, in which all the beings of the *inferiour* world were faithfully repreſented according to their *true*, *native*, and *genuine perfections*. *God* created the *ſoul* of *man* not only *capable* of finding out the *truth* of things, but *furniſhed* him with a ſufficient κριτηριον or *touchſtone* to diſcover truth from falſhood, by a *light* ſet up in his *underſtanding*, which if he had attended to, he might have *ſecured* himſelf from all *impoſtures* and *deceits*. As all other *beings* were *created* in the full *poſſeſſion* of the *agreeable perfections* of their ſeveral *natures*, ſo was *man* too, elſe *God* would have never cloſed the work of Creation with thoſe
Gen. 1. 31. words, *And God ſaw all that he had made, and behold it was very good:* that is, endued with all thoſe *perfections* which were *ſuitable* to their ſeveral *beings*. Which man had been moſt *defective* in, if his *underſtanding* had not been *endowed* with a large *ſtock* of *intellectual knowledge*, which is the moſt *natural* and *genuine perfection* belonging to his rational being. For *reaſon* being the moſt raiſed *faculty* of *humane nature*, if that had been *defective* in its *diſcoveries* of *truth*, which is its proper *object*, it would have argued the greateſt *maim* and *imperfection* in the *being* it ſelf. For if it belongs to the *perfection* of the *ſenſitive faculties* to diſcern what is *pleaſant* from what is *hurtfull*, it muſt needs be the *perfection* of the *rational* to find out the *difference* of *truth* from *falſhood*. Not as though the *ſoul* could then have had any more than now, an actual *notion* of all the beings in the world *co-exiſting* at the ſame time, but that it would have been free from all *deceits* in its *conceptions* of things, which were not cauſed through *inadvertency*.

Sect. 2. Which will appear from the ſeveral *aſpects* man's knowledge hath, which are either *upwards* towards his *Maker*, or *abroad* on his *fellow-creatures*. If we conſider that *contemplation* of the *ſoul* which fixes it ſelf on that *Infinite being* which was the *cauſe* of it, and is properly θεωια; it will be found neceſſary

necessary for the soul to be created in a clear and distinct knowledge of him, because of man's *immediate obligation* to *obedience* unto him. Which must necessarily suppose the *knowledge* of *him*, whose *will* must be his *rule*; for if *man* were not fully convinced in the first moment after his *creation* of the *being* of him, whom he was to *obey*, his *first work* and duty would not have been actual *obedience*, but a *search* whether there was any *supream*, *infinite*, and *eternal being* or no; and whereon his *duty* to him was *founded*, and what might be sufficient *declaration* of his Will and Laws, according to which he must *regulate* his *obedience*. The *taking* off all which *doubts* and *scruples* from the *soul* of *man*, must suppose him fully satisfied upon the *first* free use of *reason*, that there was an *Infinite Power* and *Being* which produced him, and on that account had a *right* to *command* him in whatsoever he pleased, and that those *commands* of his were *declared* to him in so *certain* a way, that he could not be *deceived* in the judging of them. The clear *knowledge* of *God* will further appear most *necessary* to *man* in his *first creation*, if we consider that *God* created him for this *end* and *purpose*, to enjoy *converse*, and an *humble familiarity* with himself; he had then ἄμφυτον πρὸς τὸ θεῖον κοινωνίαν in the language of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Converse with God was as natural to him as his being was.* For *man*, as he came first out of *God*'s hands, was the *reflection* of *God* himself on a *dark Cloud*, the *Iris* of the *Deity*, the *similitude* was the *same*, but the *substance* different: Thence he is said to be created *after the Image of God.* His *knowledge* then had been more *intellectual* than *discursive*; not so much *imploying* his *faculties* in the *operose deductions* of *reason* (the pleasant *toyl* of the *rational faculties* since the *Fall*) but had *immediately imployed* them about the *sublimest objects*, not about *quiddities* and *formalities*, but about *him* who was the *fountain* of his *being*, and the *center* of his *happiness*. There was not then so vast a *difference* between the *Angelical* and *humane* life: The *Angels* and *men* both fed on the same *dainties*; all the *difference* was, they were in the ὑπερῶον, *the upper room* in *heaven*, and *man* in the *Summer Parlour* in *Paradise*.

Protrept. p. 63.

Gen. 1. 26.

If we take a view of man's *knowledge* as it *respects* his *fellow-creatures*, we shall find *these* were so fully *known* to him on his first *creation*, that he needed not to go to *School* to the wide

Sect. 3.

world to gather up his *conceptions* of them. For the right exerciſe of that *Dominion* which he was *inſtated* in over the *inferiour* world, doth imply a particular *knowledge* of the *nature*, *being*, and *properties* of thoſe *things* which he was to make *uſe* of, without which he could not have *improved* them for their peculiar *ends*. And from this *knowledge* did proceed the giving the *creatures* thoſe *proper* and *peculiar names* which were *expreſſive* of their *ſeveral natures*. For as *Plato* tells us, οὐ πάντα δημιεργὸν ὀνομάτων ἐστί, ἀλλὰ μόνον ἐκεῖνον ὃς ἀποβλέπων εἰς τὸ τῇ φύσει ὄνομα ἐπέθηκεν: *The impoſition of names on things belongs not to every one, but only to him that hath a full proſpect into their ſeveral natures.* For it is moſt agreeable to reaſon, that *names* ſhould carry in them a *ſuitableneſs* to the *things* they *expreſs*; for words being for no other end but to expreſs our *conceptions* of *things*, and our *conceptions* being but εἰκόνες καὶ ὁμοιώματα πραγμάτων, as the ſame *Philoſopher* ſpeaks, *the reſemblances and repreſentations of the things*, it muſt need follow, that where there was a true knowledge, the *conceptions* muſt agree with the *things*; and *words* being to *expreſs* our *conceptions*, none are ſo fit to do it, as thoſe which are *expreſſive* of the ſeveral *natures* of the things they are uſed to *repreſent*. For otherwiſe all the *uſe* of *words* is to be a meer *vocabulary* to the underſtanding, and an *Index* to *memory*, and of no further *uſe* in the purſuit of *knowledge*, than to let us know what *words* men are agreed to call *things* by. But ſomething further ſeems to be intended in their firſt *impoſition*, whence the *Jews* call it הברלת המינים as *Mercer* tells us, *a ſeparation and diſtinction of the ſeveral kinds of things*: and *Kircher* thus paraphraſed the words of *Moſes*. *And whatſoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof*, i. e. ſaith he, *Fuerunt illis vera & germana nomina & rerum naturis proprie accommodata.* But however this be, we have this further *evidence* of that *height* of *knowledge* which muſt be ſuppoſed in the *firſt man*, that as he was the *firſt* in his kind, ſo he was to be the *ſtandard* and *meaſure* of all that followed, and therefore could not want any thing of the *due perfections* of *humane nature*. And as the *ſhekel* of the *Sanctuary* was, if not *double* to others, (as men ordinarily miſtake) yet of a *full* and *exact weight*, becauſe it was to be the *ſtandard* for all other *weights* (which was the cauſe of its being kept

In Cratylo.

In *Gen.* 2. 19.

Oedip. Egypt. Tom. 2. *Claſſ.* 2. *cap.* 1.

kept in the *Temple.)* So if the *firſt man* had not *double* the *proportion* and *meaſure* of *knowledge* which his *poſterity* hath, if it was not *running over* in regard of *abundance*, yet it muſt be *preſſed down* and *ſhaken together* in regard of *weight*, elſe he would be a very unfit *ſtandard* for us to judge by, concerning the *due* and *ſuitable perfections* of *humane nature.*

But we need not have run ſo far back as the *firſt man* to evince the *knowledge* of *truth* to be the moſt natural *perfection* of the *ſoul* of man; for even among the preſent *ruines* of humane nature we may find ſome ſuch *noble* and *generous* ſpirits, that diſcern ſo much *beauty* in the *face* of truth, that to ſuch as ſhould enquire what they find ſo *attractive* in it, their anſwer would be the ſame with *Ariſtotle's* in a like caſe, it was πυθοῦ ἐρώτημα, the *Queſtion* of thoſe who never *ſaw* it. For ſo *pleaſing* is the *enquiry*, and ſo *ſatisfactory* the *finding* of *truth* after the *ſearch*, that the *reliſh* of it doth far *exceed* the greateſt *Epicuriſm* of *Apicius*, or the moſt coſtly entertainments of *Cleopatra*; there being no *Guſt* ſo exquiſite as that of the *mind*, nor any *Jewels* to be compared with *Truth.* Nor do any perſons certainly better deſerve the *name* of *men*, than ſuch who allow their *reaſon* a *full employment*, and think not the *erectneſs* of man's *ſtature* a ſufficient *diſtinction* of him from *Brutes.* Of which thoſe may be accounted only a higher *ſpecies* who can patiently ſuffer the *impriſonment* of their *Intellectuals* in a *Dungeon* of *Ignorance*, and know themſelves to be *men*, only by thoſe *Characters* by which *Alexander* knew himſelf not to be a *God*, by their proneneſs to *intemperance* and *ſleep.* So ſtrange a *Metempſychoſis* may there be without any change of bodies, and *Euphorbus* his ſoul might become a *Brute*, without ever removing its *lodging* into the body of an *Aſs.* So much will the *ſoul degenerate* from it ſelf, if not *improved*, and in a kind of *ſullenneſs* ſcarce appear to be what it is, becauſe it is not *improved* to what it may be. Sect. 4.

But if this knowledge of truth be ſo great, ſo natural, ſo valuable a perfection of humane nature, whence comes ſo much of the world to be over-run with Ignorance and Barbariſm, whence come ſo many pretenders to knowledge, to court a cloud inſtead of Juno, *to pretend a Love to truth, and yet to fall down and worſhip error? If there were ſo great a ſympathy between the ſoul and truth, there would be an impatient deſire after it, and a moſt ready embracing* Sect. 5. Object.

bracing and closing with it. We see the Magnet doth not draw the Iron with greater force than it seems to run with impatience into its closest embraces. If there had been formerly so intimate an acquaintance between the soul and truth, as Socrates *fansied of friends in the other world, there would be an harmonious closure upon the first appearance, and no divorce to be after made between them?*

Answ. True, but then we must consider there is an *intermediate state* between the former *acquaintance*, and the *renewal* of it, wherein all those remaining *characters* of mutual knowledge are *sunk* so *deep*, and lie so *hid*, that there needs a new *fire* to be *kindled* to bring forth those latent *figures*, and make them again appear *legible*. And when once those *tokens* are produced of the former *friendship*, there are not more impatient *longings*, nor more close *embraces* between the touched *needle* and the *Magnet*, than there are between the *understanding* and discovered *truth*. But then withall, we are to consider that they are but few whose *souls* are *awakened* out of that *Lethargy* they are fallen into in this *degenerate condition*, the most are so pleased with their *sleep*, that they are loth to *disturb* their rest, and set a higher price upon a *lazy Ignorance*, than upon a *restless Knowledge*. And even of those whose *souls* are as it were between *sleeping* and *waking*, what by reason of the remaining *confusion* of the *species* in their brains, what by the present *dimness* of their *sight*, and the hovering *uncertain light* they are to judge by, there are few that can put a *difference* between a meer *phantasm* and a *real truth*. Of which these rational accounts may be given, viz. *Why so few pretenders to knowledge do light on truth.*

Sect. 6. First, *Want of an impartial diligence in the search of it. Truth* now must be *sought*, and that with care and diligence, before we find it; *Jewels* do not use to lie upon the *surface* of the earth: *High-ways* are seldom paved with *Gold*; what is most *worth* our *Finding*, calls for the *greatest search*. If one that *walks* the *streets* should *find* some inestimable *Jewel*, or one that *travels* the road meet with a *bag* of *gold*, it would be but a silly design of any to *walk* the *street*, or *travel* the *road* in hopes to meet with such a *purchase* to make them *rich*. If some have happily *light* on some valuable *truths* when they minded nothing less than them, must this render a *diligence* useless in

inquiries

inquiries after ſuch? No: *Truth*, though ſhe be ſo *fair* and *pleaſing* as to draw our *affections*, is yet ſo *modeſt* as to admit of being *courted*, and, it may be, *deny* the firſt *ſuit*, to *heighten* our *importunity*. And certainly nothing hath oftner forbid the *banes* between the *Underſtanding* and *Truth* inquired after, than *partiality* and *pre-occupation* of *Judgment*: which makes men enquire more diligently after the *dowry* than the *beauty* of Truth, its *correſpondency* to their *Intereſts*, than its *evidence* to their *underſtandings*. An *uſeful error* hath often kept the *Keys* of the mind for free *admiſſion*, when *important truths* but contrary to their *pre-conceptions* or *intereſts* have been forbidden entrance. *Prejudice* is the wrong *biaſs* of the ſoul, that effectually keeps it from coming *near* the *mark* of truth; nay, ſets it at the greateſt diſtance from it. There are *few* in the world that *look* after *truth* with their own *eyes*, moſt make uſe of *ſpectacles* of others making, which makes them ſo ſeldom *behold* the proper *lineaments* in the *face* of Truth; which the ſeveral *tinctures* from *education*, *authority*, *cuſtom* and *pre-diſpoſition* do exceedingly *hinder* men from *diſcerning* of.

Another reaſon why there are ſo few who find Truth, when ſo many pretend to *ſeek* it, is, That *near reſemblance which Error often bears to Truth*. It hath been well *obſerved*, that *Error* ſeldom *walks* abroad the world in her own *raiments*; ſhe always *borrows* ſomething of *Truth*, to make her more *acceptable* to the *world*. It hath been always the *ſubtilty* of *grand deceivers* to *graft* their greateſt *errors* on ſome material *truths*, to make them *paſs* more *undiſcernable* to all ſuch who look more at the *root* on which they *ſtand*, than on the *fruits* which they *bring forth*. It will hereafter appear how moſt of the groſſeſt of the *Heathen errors* have, as *Plutarch* ſaith of the *Ægyptian fables*, ἀμυδρὰς πινὰς ἐμφάσεις ἀλλ' ἀμυδρὰς, *ſome faint and obſcure reſemblances of truth*; nay more than ſo, as moſt *pernicious weeds* are bred in the *fatteſt ſoils*, their moſt *deſtructive principles* have been founded on ſome *neceſſary* and *important truths*. Thus *Idolatry* doth ſuppoſe the *belief* of the *exiſtence* of a *Deity*; and *Superſtition* the *immortality* of the *ſouls* of *men*. The *Devil* could never have built his *Chapels*, but on the ſame *ground* whereon God's *Temples* ſtood; which makes me far leſs *wonder* than many do, at the meeting with many *expreſſions* concerning theſe two *grand truths* in the *writings* of *Sect.* 7.

of ancient *Heathens*, knowing how willing the *Devil* might be to have ſuch *principles* ſtill owned in the *world*, which by his *depraving* of them might be the *nouriſhers* of *Idolatry* and *Superſtition*. For the general *knowledge* of a *Divine nature*, ſuppoſing men *ignorant* of the *true God*, did only lay a *foundation* to *erect* his *idolatrous Temples* upon; and the *belief* of the *ſoul's ſurviving* the *body* after death, without *knowledge* of the *true way* of *attaining happineſs*, did make men *more eager* of *embracing* thoſe *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, which came with a *pretence* of ſhewing the *way* to a *bleſſed immortality*.

Sect. 8. Which may be a moſt probable *reaſon* why *Philoſophy* and *Idolatry* did increaſe ſo much together as they did; for though *right reaſon* fully *improved*, would have *overthrown* all thoſe curſed and *idolatrous practices* among the *Heathens*; yet *reaſon* only diſcerning ſome *general notions* without their *particular application* and improvement, did only *diſpoſe* the moſt ordinary ſort of *people* to a more ready *entertainment* of the moſt groſs *Idolatry*. For hereby they *diſcerned* the *neceſſity* of ſome kind of *worſhip*, but could not find out the *right way* of it, and therefore they greedily *followed* that which was *commended* to them, by *ſuch* who did withall *agree* with them in the *common ſentiments* of humane nature: Nay, and thoſe *perſons* themſelves who were the great *maintainers* of theſe *ſublimer notions* concerning *God* and the *ſoul of man*, were either the great *Inſtruments* of advancing that horrid *ſuperſtition* among them, as *Orpheus* and *Apollonius*, or very forward *Complyers* with it, as many of the *Philoſophers* were. Although withall it cannot be denied to have been a wonderfull *diſcovery* of *Divine providence*, by theſe *general notions* to keep *waking* the inward *ſenſes* of *mens ſouls*, that thereby it might appear when *Divine revelation* ſhould be manifeſted to them, that it brought nothing contrary to the *common principles* of humane nature, but did only *rectifie* the *depravations* of it, and clearly ſhew men that way which they had long been ignorantly ſeeking after. Which was the excellent advantage the *Apoſtle* made of the *Inſcription* on the *Altar* at *Athens* to the *unknown God*;

Act. 17. 23. *Whom*, ſaith he, *ye ignorantly ſerve, him I declare unto you.* And which was the happy *uſe* the *Primitive learned Chriſtians* made of all thoſe *paſſages* concerning the *divine nature*, and the *Immortality* of the *ſouls of men*, which they found in the *Heathen*

then writers, thereby to *evidence* to the world that the main *postulata* or *suppositions* of *Christian Religion* were granted by their own most *admired men*: and that *Christianity* did not *raise* out, but only *build* upon those *common foundations*, which were entertained by all who had any *name* for *reason*.

Sect. 9. Though this, I say, were the happy effect of this *building errours* on *common truths* to all that had the *advantage* of *Divine Revelation* to discern the *one* from the *other*; yet as to *others* who were *destitute* of it, they were *liable* to this two-fold great *inconvenience* by it. First, *for the sake of the apparent rottenness of the Superstructures, to question the soundness of the foundations on which they stood.* And this I doubt not was the case of many *considerative heathens*, who observing that *monstrous* and *unreasonable* way of *worship* obtaining among the *heathen*, and not being able by the *strength* of their own *reason*, through the want of *divine revelation*, to deduce any certain *instituted worship*, they were shrewdly *tempted* to renounce those *principles*, when they could not but abhor the *conclusions* drawn from them; for there is nothing more *usual* than for *men* who exceedingly *detest* some absurd *consequence* they see may be drawn from a *principle* supposed, to *reject* the *principle* it self for the *sake* of that *consequence*, which it may be doth not *necessarily* follow from it, but through the *shortness* of their own *reason* doth appear to them to do so. Thus when the *intelligent heathen* did apparently see that from the *principles* of the *Being of God*, and the *Immortality of souls*, did flow all those *unnatural* and *inhumane Sacrifices*, all those *absurd* and *ridiculous Rites*, all those *execrable* and *profane Mysteries*, out of a loathing the *immoralities* and *impieties* which attended these, they were brought to *question* the very *truth* and *certainty* of those *principles* which were *capable* of being thus abused.

Sect. 10. And therefore I am very prone to *suspect* the *Apology* usually made for *Protagoras*, *Diagoras*, and such others of them who were accounted *Atheists*, to be more *favourable* than *true*, viz. *that they only rejected those heathen Deities, and not the belief of the Divine nature.* I should think this *account* of their reputed *Atheism rational*, were it any ways *evident* that they did build their *belief* of a *Divine nature*, upon any other *grounds* than such as were *common* to them with those whose *worship* they so much *derided*. And therefore when the Heathens accused

the *Chriſtians* of *Atheiſm*, I have full and clear *evidence* that no more could be meant thereby than the *rejection of their way of worſhip*, becauſe I have ſufficient *Aſſurance* from them that they did *believe* in a *Divine nature*, and an *inſtituted Religion* moſt ſuitable to the moſt *common received notions* of *God*, which they owned in *oppoſition* to all *heathen worſhip*. Which I find not in the leaſt pretended to by any of the forementioned *perſons*, nor any thing of any different *way* of *Religion* aſſerted, but only a *deſtruction* of that in *uſe* among them.

Sect. 11. And although the caſe of *Anaxagoras Clazomenius*, and the reſt of the *Jonick Philoſophers*, might ſeem very different from *Diagoras*, *Theodorus*, and thoſe beforementioned, becauſe although they denied the *gods* in vulgar *repute* to be ſuch as they were thought to be (as *Anaxagoras* call'd the *Sun* μύδρον διάπυρον, *a mere globe of fire*, for which he was condemned at *Athens* to baniſhment, and fined five *talents*; yet the learned *De Idololat. c. 1.* *Voſſius* puts in this Plea in his behalf, That he was one that *aſſerted* the *creation* of the *world* to flow from an *eternal mind*:) although therefore, I ſay, the caſe of the *Ionick Philoſophers* may ſeem far *different* from the *others*, becauſe of their *aſſerting* the *production* of the *world* (which from *Thales Mileſius* was conveyed by *Anaximander* and *Anaximenes* to *Anaxagoras*) yet to *one* that throughly *conſiders* what they *underſtood* by *their eternal mind*, they may be ſooner *cleared* from the *imputation* of *Atheiſm*, than *Irreligion*. Which *two* certainly ought in this caſe to be *diſtinguiſhed*; for it is very *poſſible* for men, meeting with ſuch *inſuperable* difficulties about the *caſual concourſe* of Atoms for the *production of the world*, or the *eternal exiſtence of matter*, to aſſert ſome *eternal mind*, as the *firſt cauſe* of theſe things, which yet they may *imbrace* only as an *hypotheſis* in *Philoſophy* to *ſolve* the *phænomena* of *nature* with, but yet not to make this *eternal mind* the *object of adoration*. And ſo their *aſſerting* a *Deity* was only on the ſame account as the *Tragedians* uſed to bring in their Θεὸς ἀπὸ μηχανῆς, when their *Fables* were brought to ſuch an *iſſue*, and *perplexed* with ſo many *difficulties* that they ſaw no *way* to clear them again, but to make ſome *God* come down upon the *Stage* to *ſolve* the *difficulties* they were engaged in; or, as *Seneca* ſaith of many great *Families* when they had run up their *Genealogies* ſo *high* that they could go no further, they then fetched their *pedegree* from

from the *Gods*: So when these *Philosophers* saw such *incongruities* in asserting an *infinite* and *eternal series of matter*, they might by this be brought to acknowledge some *active principle* which produced the world, though they were far enough from giving any *religious worship* to that *eternal mind*.

Thus even *Epicurus* and his *Followers* would not *stick* to assert the *being* of a *God*, so they might but *circumscribe* him within the *heavens*, and let him have nothing to *do* with *things* that were done on *earth*. And how *uncertain* the most *dogmatical* of them all were, as to their *opinions* concerning the *being* and *nature* of their *gods*, doth fully appear from the large *discourses* of *Tully* upon that subject: where is fully *manifested* their *variety* of *opinions* and *mutual repugnancies*, their *self-contradictions* and *inconstancy* in their own *assertions*; which hath made me somewhat *inclinable* to think that the *reason* why many of them did to the *world* own a *Deity*, was, That they might not be *Martyrs* for *Atheism*: Which *Tully* likewise seems to *acknowledge*, when speaking of the *punishment* of *Protagoras*, for that Speech of his; *De diis neque ut sint, neque ut non sint, habeo dicere. Ex quo equidem existimo tardiores ad hanc sententiam profitendam multos esse factos, quippe cum pœnam ne dubitatio quidem effugere potuisset.* So that for all the *verbal* asserting of a *Deity* among them, we have no certain evidence of their firm *belief* of it, and much less of any *worship* and *service* they owed unto it. And though, it may be, could not totally *excuse* the *notions* of a *Deity* out of their minds, partly through that *natural sense* which is *engraven* on the *souls* of *men*; partly, as being *unable* to *solve* the *difficulties* of *nature*, without a *Deity*; yet the *observing* the *notorious vanities* of *Heathen worship*, might make them look upon it as a mere *Philosophical speculation*, and not any thing that had an *influence* upon the *government* of mens *lives*: For, as in *nature*, the *observing* the great mixture of *falshood* and *truth* made the *Academicks* deny any certain κριτήριον, or *rule of judging truth*; and the *Scepticks* take away all *certain assent*; so the same *consequence* was *unavoidable* here, upon the same *principle*; and that made even *Plato* himself so *ambiguous* and *uncertain* in his discourses of a *Deity*, sometimes making him an *eternal mind*, sometimes asserting the *whole World*, *Sun*, *Moon*, *Stars*, *Earth*, *Souls* and all, to be *Gods*, and even those that were worshipped

Sect. 12.

De nat. Deor. l. 1. *c.* 63.

among the *heathens*, as *Tully* tells us out of his *Timæus* and *de Legibus*; which as *Velleius* the *Epicurean* there ſpeaks, *Et per ſe ſunt falſa & ſibi invicem repugnantia.* This is the firſt inconvenience following the *mixture* of *truth* and *falſhood, for the ſake of the falſhood to queſtion the truth it ſelf it was joyned with.*

Sect. 13. The *other* is as *great* which follows, when *truth* and *falſhood* are *mixed, for the ſake of the truth to embrace the falſhood.* Which is a *miſtake* as *common* as the *other*; becauſe *men* are apt to *think* that things ſo vaſtly different as *truth* and *falſhood*, could never *blend*, or be *incorporate* together; therefore when they are *certain* they have ſome *truth*, they conclude no *falſhood* to be joyned with it. And this I ſuppoſe to have been the *caſe* of the more *credulous* and *vulgar Heathen*, as the other was of the *Philoſophers*; for they, finding *mankind* to agree in this, not only that there is a *God*, but that he muſt be *worſhipp'd*, did without *ſcruple* make uſe of the way of *worſhip* among them, as knowing there muſt be *ſome*, and they were ignorant of *any elſe*. And from hence they grew to be as confident *believers* of all thoſe *fables* and *traditions* on which their *idolatry* was founded, as of thoſe *firſt principles* and *notions* from which the *neceſſity of divine worſhip* did ariſe. And being thus *habituated* to the *belief* of theſe things, when *truth* it ſelf was *divulged* among them, they *ſuſpected* it to be only a *corruption* of ſome of their *fables*. This *Celſus* the *Epicurean* on all occaſions in his *books* againſt the *Chriſtians*, did fly to. Thus he ſaith the *building of the Tower of Babel*, and the *confuſion of Tongues*, was taken from the *fable of the* Aloadæ *in* Homer's *Odyſſes*; the ſtory of the *Floud*, from *Deucalion*; *Paradiſe*, from *Alcinous his Gardens*, the *burning of Sodom and Gomorrah*, from the ſtory of *Phaeton*. Which *Origen* well *refutes*, from the far greater *antiquity* of thoſe *relations* among the *Jews*, than any among the *Greeks*: and therefore the *corruption* of the *tradition* was in *them*, and not the *Jews*. Which muſt be our only way for finding out which was the *original*, and which the *corruption*, by *demonſtrating* the *undoubted antiquity* of *one* beyond the *other*, whereby we muſt do as *Archimedes* did by the Crown of *Hiero*, find out the exact *proportions* of *truth* and *falſhood* which lay in all thoſe *heathen fables*.

Apud Orig. c. Celſ. l. 4. p. 174, 179.

Sect. 14. And this now leads to the *third account*, Why *truth* is ſo hardly *diſcerned* from *errour*, even by thoſe who ſearch after it, which

which is the *great obſcurity of the Hiſtory of Ancient Times*, which ſhould decide the *Controverſie*. For there being an univerſal *agreement* in ſome *common principles*, and a frequent *reſemblance* in *particular traditions*, we muſt of neceſſity, for the clearing the *truth* from its *corruption*, have *recourſe* to *ancient hiſtory*, to ſee if thereby we can find out where the *Original tradition* was beſt preſerved, by what *means* it came to be *corrupted*, and whereby we may *diſtinguiſh* thoſe *corruptions* from the *Truths* to which they are *annexed*: Which is the *deſign* and *ſubject* of our future *diſcourſe*, viz. *to demonſtrate that there was a certain original and general tradition preſerved in the world concerning the eldeſt Ages of the world*; *that this tradition was gradually corrupted among the Heathens*; *that notwithſtanding this corruption there were ſufficient remainders of it to evidence its true original*; *that the full account of this tradition is alone preſerved in thoſe books we call the Scriptures*: *That where any other hiſtory ſeems to croſs the report contained in them, we have ſufficient ground to queſtion their credibility*; *and that there is ſufficient evidence to clear the undoubted certainty of that hiſtory which is contained in the Sacred Records of Scripture*. Wherein we ſhall obſerve the ſame method which *Thales* took in taking the height of the *Pyramids*, by meaſuring the *length* of their *ſhadow*; ſo ſhall we the *height* and *antiquity* of *truth* from the *extent* of the *fabulous corruptions* of it. Which will be a *work* of ſo much the greater *difficulty*, becauſe the *truth* we purſue after takes *covert* in ſo great *antiquity*, and we muſt be forced to *follow* its moſt *flying footſteps* through the *dark* and *ſhady paths* of *ancient hiſtory*. For though *hiſtory* be frequently called the *Light of Truth*, and the *Herald of Times*, yet that *light* is ſo *faint* and *dim*, eſpecially in *Heathen Nations*, as not to ſerve to diſcover the *face* of *Truth* from her *counterfeit*, *Errour*; and that *Herald* ſo *little skill'd*, as not to be able to *tell* us which is of the *Elder houſe*. The reaſon is, though *Truth* be always of *greater Antiquity*, yet *Errour* may have the more *wrinkled face*, by which it often *impoſeth* on ſuch who gueſs *antiquity* by *deformity*, and think nothing ſo *old* as that which can give the leaſt *account* of its own *age*. This is evidently the caſe of thoſe who make the pretence of *ancient hiſtory* a plea *for Infidelity*, and think no *argument* more *plauſible* to *impugn* the *certainty* of *Divine Revelation* with, than the

the ſeeming *repugnancy* of ſome *pretended hiſtories* with the *account* of *ancient time* reported in the *Bible*. Which being a *pretext* ſo *unworthy*, and deſigned for ſo ill an end, and ſo frequently made *uſe* of, by ſuch who account *Infidelity* a piece of *antiquity* as well as *reaſon*, it may be worth our while to ſhew, That it is no more *liable* to be *baffled* with *reaſon*, than to be *confuted* by *antiquity*.

Sect. 15. In order therefore to the removing of this ſtumbling-block in our way, I ſhall *firſt* evince, *that there is no certain credibility in any of thoſe ancient hiſtories which ſeem to contradict the Scriptures*, nor any ground of reaſon why we ſhould *aſſent* to them, when they differ from the *Bible*: and then prove, *that all thoſe undoubted characters of a moſt certain and authentick hiſtory are legible in thoſe records contained in Scripture*. Whereby we ſhall not only ſhew the *unreaſonableneſs* of *infidelity*, but the rational *evidence* which our *faith* doth ſtand on as to theſe things. I ſhall *demonſtrate* the *firſt* of theſe, *viz that there is no ground of aſſent to any ancient hiſtories which give an account of things different from the Scriptures*, from theſe arguments; *The apparent defect, weakneſs and inſufficiency* of them as to the giving an account of elder times; *The monſtrous confuſion, ambiguity and uncertainty* of them in the account which they give; *The evident partiality* of them to themſelves, and *inconſiſtency with each other*. I begin with the firſt of theſe, the *defect* and *inſufficiency* of them to give in ſuch an account of elder times as may amount to *certain credibility*; which, if cleared, will of it ſelf be ſufficient to manifeſt the *incompetency* of thoſe *records*, as to the laying any *foundation* for any *firm aſſent* to be given to them. Now this *defect* and *inſufficiency* of thoſe hiſtories is either more *general*, which lies in common to them all, or ſuch as may be obſerved in *a particular conſideration* of the *hiſtories* of thoſe ſeveral *Nations* which have pretended higheſt to *antiquity*.

Sect. 16. The *general* defect is, the *want of timely records to preſerve their hiſtories in*. For it is moſt evident, that the trueſt *hiſtory* in the world is *liable* to various *corruptions* through *length* of time, if there be no *certain way* of preſerving it *entire*. And that, through the *frailty* of *memory* in thoſe who had *integrity* to *preſerve* it, through the *gradual increaſe* of *barbariſm* and *ignorance*, where there are no *ways* of *inſtruction*, and through the

the *subtilty* of such whose *interest* it may be to *corrupt* and *alter* that *tradition*. If we find such infinite *variety* and *difference* of *men*, as to the *histories* of their own *times*, when they have all *possible means* to be *acquainted* with the *truth* of them; what *account* can we imagine can be given by those who had no certain way of preserving to *posterity* the most *authentick* relation of former Ages? *Especially*, it being most evident, that where any certain way of *preserving tradition* is wanting, a People must soon *degenerate* into the greatest *stupidity* and *barbarism*, because all will be taken up in minding their own *petty concerns*, and no *encouragement* at all given to such *publick spirits*, who would mind the *credit* of the whole Nation. For what was there for such to *employ* themselves upon, or spend their time in, when they had no other kind of *learning* among them, but some *general traditions conveyed* from *father* to *son*, which might be *learned* by such who followed nothing but *domestick employments*? So that the *sons of Noah*, after their several *dispersions* and *plantations* of several *Countries*, did gradually *degenerate* into *ignorance* and *barbarism*: for, upon their first *setling* in any *Countrey*, they found it *employment* sufficient to *cultivate* the *Land*, and fit themselves *habitations* to *live* in, and to provide themselves of *necessities* for their *mutual comfort* and *subsistence*. Besides this, they were often put to *removes* from one *place* to *another*, where they could not conveniently *reside* (which *Thucydides* speaks much of as to the *ancient state of Greece*) and it was a great while before they came to *imbody* themselves together in *Towns* and *Cities*, and from thence to spread into *Provinces*, and to *settle* the *bounds* and *extents* of their *Territories*. The *first age*, after the *plantation* of a *Countrey* being thus *spent*, the *next* saw it *necessary* to fall *close* to the *work* of *husbandry*, not only to get *something* out of the *earth* for their *subsistence*; but when by their *diligence* they had so far *improved* the *ground*, that they had not only *enough* for themselves, but to *spare* to others, they then found out a way for *commerce* one with another by *exchange*. This way of *traffick* made them *begin* to *raise* their *hopes* higher, of *enriching* themselves; which when some of them had done, they bring the *poorer* under their *power*, and *reign* as *Lords* over them; these *rich*, with their *dependants*, strive to *outvye* each other, whence came *wars* and mutual

contentions,

contentions, till they who got the *better* over their *adverſaries*, took ſtill greater *authority* into their hands (thence at *firſt* every *City* almoſt, and *adjacent Territory*, had a *King* over it) which by *conflicting* with each *other*, at laſt *brought* ſeveral *Cities* and *Territories* under the *power* of *one* particular perſon; who thereby came to *reign* as *ſole Monarch* over all within his *dominions*.

Sect. 17. For although there be ſome *reaſon* to think that the *Leaders* of ſeveral *Colonies* had at firſt *ſuperiority* over all that went with them; yet there being evidence in few *Nations* of any continued *ſucceſſion* of *Monarchs* from the *poſterity of Noah*, and ſo great *evidence* of ſo many petty *royalties* almoſt in every *City* (as we read of ſuch *multitudes* of *Kings* in the ſmall territory of *Canaan*, when *Joſhua* conquered it,) this makes it at leaſt *probable* to me, that after the *death* of the *firſt Leader*, by reaſon of their *poverty* and *diſperſedneſs* of *habitations*, they did not *incorporate* generally into any Civil government under *one* head, but did riſe by *degrees* in the *manner* before ſet down; but yet ſo, that in the *petty diviſions* ſome *prerogative* might be given to *him* who derived his *pedigree* the *neareſt* from the firſt *Founder* of that *plantation*; which in all *probability* is the meaning of *Thucydides*, who tells us when the *riches* of *Greece* began to increaſe, and their power improved, *Tyrannies* were erected in moſt *Cities* (πάντεσσιν ὦν ἦσαν ὅσαι μὴ πάτριοι γέρεα πατρικὰ βασιλεῖαι, *for before that time Kingdoms with honours limited were hereditary*) for ſo the *Scholiaſt* explains it, πατρικαὶ βασιλεῖαι ἀπὸ τῆς πατρίας παραλαμβανόμεναι κατὰ διαδοχὴν γένους. This then being the *ſtate* and *caſe* of moſt *Nations* in the *firſt ages* after their *plantation*, there was no *likelihood* at all of any great *improvement* in *knowledge* among them; nay ſo far from it, that for the *firſt ages*, wherein they *conflicted* with *poverty* and *neceſſity*, there was a *neceſſary decay* among them, of what *knowledge* had been *conveyed* to them; becauſe their *neceſſities* kept them in *continual employment*; and after that they *conquered* them, they *began* to *conquer each other*, that 'till ſuch time as they were *ſettled* in *peace* under *eſtabliſhed Common-wealths*, there was no *leiſure*, nor *opportunity* for any *Arts* and *Sciences* to *flouriſh*, without which all certain *hiſtories* of their own former *ſtate* muſt *vaniſh* and *dwindle* into ſome *fabulous ſtories*. And ſo we *find* they did in moſt *Nations*, which thence are

Lib. 1. hiſt. p. 10. Ed. Port.

able

able to *give* no other *account* of *themselves*, but that they *sprung* out of the *earth* where they *lived*; from which *opinion* the *Athenians* used to wear of old their *golden grashoppers*, as *Thucydides* relates. What *account* can we then *expect* of *ancient times* from such *Nations* which were so *defective* in preserving their own *Originals?*

Now this *defectiveness* of giving *testimony* of *ancient times* by these *Nations*, will further *appear* by these *two considerations:* First, *What ways there are for communicating knowledge to posterity.* Secondly, *How long it was ere these Nations came to be Masters of any way of certain communicating their conceptions to their Successors. Three general ways* there are whereby knowledge may be propagated from one to another; by *representative symbols*, by *speech*, and by *letters.* The *first* of these was most common in those *elder times*, for which purpose *Clemens Alexandrinus* produceth the *testimony* of an *ancient Grammarian*, *Dionysius Thrax* in his *Exposition of the symbol of the wheels:* ἐσήμαινον γὰρ οὐ διὰ λέξεως μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ συμβόλων ἔνιοι τὰς πράξεις: *That some persons made a representation of their actions to others, not only by speech, but by symbols too.* Which any one who is any ways conversant in the *Learning* of those *ancient times*, will find to have been the *chief* way of *propagating* it (such as it was) from one to another, as is evident in the *Hieroglyphicks* of the *Ægyptians*, and the custom of *symbols* from thence derived among the *Grecian Philosophers*, especially the *Pythagoreans.* It was the solemn custom of the *Ægyptians* to *wrap* up all the little *knowledge* they had under such *mystical representations*, which were unavoidably *clogged* with two inconveniences very *unsuitable* to the *propagation* of *knowledge*, which were *obscurity* and *ambiguity:* for it not only *cost* them a great deal of time to *gather* up such *symbolical* things which might *represent* their *conceptions*; but when they had pitched upon them, they were *liable* to a great *variety* of *interpretations*, as is evident in all those *remainders* of them, *preserved* by the *Industry* of some ancient Writers, as in their κωμασικὰ, or *golden Images of their Gods*, they had ingraved *two dogs*, *an hawk*, and an *Ibis.* By the *dogs* some understood the two *Hemispheres*, others the two *Tropicks*; by the *hawk* some understood the *Sun*, others the *Æquinoctial*; by the *Ibis* some the *Moon*, others the *Zodiack*, as is evident in *Clemens*,

Sect. 18.

Strom. l. 5.

who reports it. This way then is a moſt unfit *way* to *convey* any *ancient tradition*, by being both *obſcure*, *ambiguous*, and *unable* to *expreſs* ſo much as to give any certain light to *future ages* of the *paſſages* of the *precedent*.

Sect. 19. The other ways of conveying *knowledge*, are either by *ſpeech*, or by *letters*. The *firſt* muſt be by ſome *vocal Cabala* delivered down from *Father* to *Son*: but *words* being of ſo *periſhing* a *nature*, and man's *memory* ſo *weak* and *frail* in retaining them, it is *neceſſary* for a *certain communication* of *knowledge*, that ſome *way* ſhould be found out more *laſting* than *words*, more *firm* than *memory*, more *faithfull* than *tradition*: which could not otherwiſe be *imagined*, than that the *Authour* of his own *conceptions* ſhould himſelf *leave* them to the *view* of all *poſterity*; in order to *which*, ſome way muſt be *contrived* whereby mens *voices* might be *ſeen*, and mens *fingers* ſpeak. But how to *expreſs* all kind of *ſounds*, with the ſeveral *draughts* of a *pen*, and to confine them within the *compaſs* of *twenty-four letters*, is deſervedly called by *Galileo*, *admirandarum omnium inventionum humanarum ſignaculum*, *the choiceſt of all humane inventions*. And had we no other evidence of the great obſcurity of *ancient hiſtory*, the great *difference* as to the firſt *inventer* of *letters*, would be a ſufficient *demonſtration* of it. For almoſt every *Nation* hath had a ſeveral *Authour* of them: The *Jews* derive them from *Adam* or *Moſes*; the *Ægyptians* attribute their *invention* to *Thayt* or *Mercury*; the *Grecians* to *Cadmus*, the *Phœnicians* to *Taautus*, the *Latins* to *Saturn*, others to the *Æthiopians*: And leſt the *Pygmies* ſhould be without their *enemies*, *ſome* think they were found out *à gruum volatu*, from the *manner* of the *flying of Cranes*. Thus it hath happened with moſt Nations; what was firſt *among themſelves*, they thought to be the *firſt* in the *world*.

Sect. 20. But by *whomſoever* they were firſt *invented*, we are certain they were but *lately* in *uſe* in that *Nation*, which hath moſt vainly *arrogated* the moſt to it ſelf in point of *Antiquity*, and yet had the leaſt reaſon (I mean the *Grecians*.) Thence the *Ægyptian Prieſt Patinet* truly told *Solon*, the *Greeks* were always *children*, becauſe they had nothing of the *antiquities* of former ages. If we may believe *Joſephus*, they had no Writings *earlier* than *Homer*; but herein he is conceived to have ſerved his *cauſe* too much, becauſe of the *Inſcription* of *Amphytrio*

Procl. in Tim. c. App. l. 8.

Hiſt. l. 5.

trio at *Thebes* in the *Temple* of *Apollo Iſmenius* in the old *Ionick letters*, and two others of the ſame age to be ſeen in *Herodotus*, and becauſe of the Writings of *Lycus*, *Orpheus*, *Muſæus*, *Oroebantius*, *Trœzenius*, *Thaletas*, *Meleſander*, and others. This we are certain of, the *Grecians* had not the uſe of *letters* among them 'till the time of *Cadmus*, the *Phœnicians* coming into *Greece*, whither he came to plant a *Colony* of *Phœnicians* there, whence aroſe the ſtory of his *purſuit* of *Europa*, as *Conon* in *Photius* tells us. *V. Boch. Geogr. p. 2. l. 1. c. 20.* *Apud Phot. Biblioth. l. 37.*

And it is very probable which *learned men* have long ſince obſerved, that the name *Cadmus* comes from the *Hebrew* קדם, and may relate as an *appellative* either to his *dignity*, as *Junius* in his *Academia* conjectures, or more probably to his *Country*, the *Eaſt*, which is frequently call'd קדם in *Scripture*. Some have conjectured further, that his proper name was עוג, upon what *reaſon* I know not, unleſs from hence, that thence by a *duplication* of the *word*, came the *Greek* Ωγυγος, who ſeems to have been no other than *Cadmus*, as will appear by comparing their ſtories together. Only one was the *name* his *memory* was preſerved by at *Athens*, where the *Cadmeans* inhabited, as appears by the *Gephyræi*, whom *Herodotus* tells us were *Phœnicians* that came with *Cadmus*, (and others fanſie the *Academia* there was originally called *Cadmea*) and the name *Cadmus* was preſerved chiefly among the *Bœotians* in memory of the *Country* whence he came: It being likely to be *impoſed* by them upon his firſt *landing* in the *Country*, as many *learned perſons* conceive the *name* of an *Hebrew* was given to *Abraham* by the *Canaanites* upon his paſſing over the River *Euphrates*. On this account then it ſtands to reaſon, that the *name* which was given him as a *ſtranger*, ſhould be longeſt preſerved in the place where it was firſt *impoſed*. Or if we take קדם in the other ſence, as it imports *antiquity*; ſo there is ſtill a higher probability of the *affinity* of the *names* of *Cadmus* and *Ogyges*; for this is certain, that the *Greeks* had no higher name for a matter of *Antiquity*, than to call it Ωγύγιον, as the *Scholiaſt* on *Heſiod*, *Heſychius*, *Suidas*, *Euſtathius* on *Dionyſius*, and many others obſerve. And which yet advanceth the *probability* higher, *Lactatius* or *Lactantius* the *Scholiaſt* on *Statius*, tells us, the other *Greeks* had this from the *Thebanes*; for, ſaith he, *Thebani res antiquas Ogygias nominabant*. But that which puts it almoſt *Hiſt. l. 5.* *In Theb. l. 1.*

beyond meer *probability*, is, that *Varro*, *Feſtus*, *Pauſanias*, *Apollonius*, *Æſchylus*, and others make *Ogyges* the Founder of the *Bœotian Thebes*, which were thence called *Ogygiæ*; and *Strabo* and *Stephanus* περὶ πόλεων, further ſay, that the whole *Country* of *Bœotia* was called *Ogygia*; now all that mention the Story of *Cadmus*, attribute to him the founding of the *Bœotian Thebes*. And withall it is obſervable, that in the *Vatican Appendix* of the *Greek Proverbs*, we read *Cadmus* called *Ogyges*; Ὠγύγια κακὰ δὴ πᾶσ' ὀκλήσων ἐπὶ συνέβη Κάδμον ἢ Ὠγύγην διὰ τὰς συγκτίσεις κακοῖς ἐκπεσεῖν. *Meurſius* indeed would have it corrected, Κάδμον ἢ Ὠγύγ᾽, as it is read in *Suidas*; but by the favour of ſo *learned* a *man*, it ſeems more probable that *Suidas* ſhould be corrected by that, he bringing no other evidence of any ſuch perſon as *Cadmus* a Son of *Ogyges*, but only that *reading* in *Suidas*; whereas we have diſcovered many probable *grounds* to make *them* both the *ſame*. That which I would now infer from hence is, the *utter impoſſibility* of the *Greeks* giving us any certain *account* of *ancient times*, when a thing ſo *modern* in compariſon as *Cadmus* his coming into *Greece*, is thought by them a *matter* of ſo great *antiquity*, that when they would deſcribe a thing very *ancient*, they deſcribed it by the *name* of *Ogyges*, who was the ſame with *Cadmus*. Now *Cadmus* his coming into *Greece*, is generally, by *Hiſtorians*, placed about the time of *Joſhua*, whence ſome (I will not ſay how happily) have conjectured, that *Cadmus* and his *company* were ſome of the *Canaanites* who fled from *Joſhua*, as others are ſuppoſed to have done into *Africa*, if *Procopius* his *pillar* hath *ſtrength* enough to *bear* ſuch a *conjecture*. But there is too great a *confuſion* about the *time* of *Cadmus* his *arrival* in *Greece*, to *affirm* any thing with any great *certainty* about it.

Cent. 4. Prov. 52.

De Regno Act. Lib. 8. c. 5.

Yet thoſe who *diſagree* from that former *Computation*, place it yet *lower*. *Voſſius* makes *Agenor*, *Cadmus* his Father, *co-temporary* with the latter end of *Moſes*, or the beginning of *Joſhua*; and ſo *Cadmus* his time muſt fall ſomewhat after. *Jac. Capellus* placeth *Cadmus* in the third year of *Othoniel*. *Parius* the Authour of the *Greek Chronicle*, in the *Marmora Arundelliana* makes his coming to *Greece* to be in the time of *Hellen* the ſon of *Deucalion*; which *Capellus* fixeth on the 73. of *Moſes*, *A.M.* 2995. But Mr. *Selden* conceives it ſomewhat lower: and ſo it muſt be, if we follow *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who placeth it

De Idol. l. 1. c. 13.

in

in the time of *Lynceus* King of the *Argives*, which he saith was ἐνδεκάτη ἀπὸ Μωσέως γένεα, *in the eleventh Generation after Moses*, which will fall about the time of *Samuel*: But though it should be so *late*, it would be no *wonder* it should be reckoned a *matter* of so great *antiquity* among the *Grecians*; for the eldest *Records* they have of any King at *Athens*, begin at the time of *Moses*, whose co-temporary *Cecrops* is generally thought to be; for at his time it is the *Parian Chronicle* begins. Now that the *Grecians* did receive their very *letters* from the *Phœnicians* by *Cadmus*, is commonly acknowledged by the most learned of the *Greeks* themselves, as *appears* by the ingenuous *confession* of *Herodotus*, *Philostratus*, *Critias* in *Athenæus*, *Zenodotus* in *Laertius*, *Timon Phliasius* in *Sextus Empiricus*, and many others: so that it were to no *purpose* to offer to prove that, which they who *arrogate* so much to *themselves*, do so *freely* acknowledge. Which yet hath been done to very good purpose by *Joseph Scaliger* and *Bochartus*, and many others from the *form of the Letters*, the *order* and the *names* of them. It seems probable that at first they might use the form of the *Phœnician Letters*, in which *Herodotus* tells us the three old *Inscriptions* were extant; and *Diodorus* tells us, that the *brass pot* which *Cadmus* offered to *Minerva Lyndia*, had an *Inscription* on it in the *Phœnician Letters*, but afterwards the *form* of the *Letters* came by degrees to be *changed*, when for their greater *expedition* in *writing* they left the old *way* of *writing* towards the *left* hand, for the more *natural* and *expedite* way of *writing* towards the *right*, by which they *exchanged* the *sites* of the *strokes* in several Letters, as is observed by the fore-cited Learned Authors.

Strom. 1.

Not. in Euseb. Chron. n. 1617. *Geogr p.* 3. *l.* 1. *cap.* 20.

Not that the old *Ionick Letters* were nearer the *Phœnician*, and distinct from the *modern*, as *Jos. Scaliger* in his learned *Discourse* on the *original of the Greek Letters* conceives; for the *Ionick Letters* were nothing else but the full *Alphabet* of *twenty-four*, with the *additions* of *Palamedes*, and *Simonides Cous*; as *Pliny* tells us, that all the *Greeks* consented in the *use* of the *Ionick Letters*; but the old *Attick Letters* came nearer the *Phœnician*, because the *Athenians*, long after the *Alphabet* was increased to 24. continued still in the use of the old 16. which were brought in by *Cadmus*, which must needs much alter the way of writing; for in the old *Letters*, they writ ΘΕΟΣ for Θεὸς, which made *Pliny*, with a great deal of *learning*

In Euseb. n. 1617.

Hist. l. 7 *cap.* 57.

ing and *truth*, ſay, that the old *Greek Letters* were the ſame with the *Roman*. Thence the *Greeks* called their ancient *Letters* Ἀτλικὰ γεγράμματα, as appears by *Harpocration* and *Heſychius*, not that they were ſo much diſtinct from others, but becauſe they did not admit of the *addition* of the other *eight Letters*, which difference of writing is in a great meaſure the *cauſe* of the different *dialect* between the *Athenians* and *Ionians* properly ſo called.

v. Mauſſacum in Harpocr. Salmaſ. in Conſecrat. Templ. p. 30.

Sect. 21. We ſee then the very *Letters* of the *Greeks* were no *elder* than *Cadmus*; and for any conſiderable *learning* among them, it was not near ſo *old*. Some aſſert indeed that *Hiſtory* began from the time of *Cadmus*; but it is by a *miſtake* of him for a younger *Cadmus*, which was *Cadmus Mileſius*, whom *Pliny* makes to be the firſt Writer in Proſe; but that he after attributes to *Pherecydes Syrius*, and Hiſtory to *Cadmus Mileſius*: and therefore I think it far more probable, that it was ſome writing of this latter *Cadmus*, which was tranſcribed and epitomized by *Bion Proconeſius*, although *Clemens Alexandrinus* ſeems to attribute it to the *Elder*. We ſee how unable then the *Grecians* were to give an account of elder times, that were guilty of ſo much *infancy* and *nonage*, as to begin to *learn* their *Letters* almoſt in the *noon-tide* of the *World*, and yet long after this to the *time* of the firſt *Olympiad* all their relations are accounted *fabulous*. A fair account then we are like to have from them of the firſt *antiquities* of the World, who could not *ſpeak plain truth* 'till the World was above three thouſand years old; for ſo it was when the *Olympiads* began.

Nat. hiſt. l. 5. c. 29. l. 7. c. 57.

Strom. l. 6.

So true is the obſervation of *Juſtin Martyr*, ὡς ἓν ἕλλησι σχεδὸν ἀπὸ Ὀλυμπιάδων ἀκριβὴς ἱστορία, the *Greeks* had no exact hiſtory of themſelves before the *Olympiads*; but of that more afterwards.

This is now the firſt *defect* which doth infringe the *credibility* of theſe *Hiſtories*, which is the *want of timely and early records to digeſt their own hiſtory in.*

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the *Phœnician* and *Ægyptian* Hiſtory.

The particular defect in the Hiſtory of the moſt learned Heathen Nations. Firſt the Phœnicians. *Of* Sanchoniathon, *his Antiquity and Fidelity. Of* Jerom-baal, Baal-Berith. *The Antiquity of* Tyre. Scaliger *vindicated againſt* Bochartus Abibalus. *The vanity of* Phœnician *Theology. The imitation of it by the* Gnoſticks. *Of the* Ægyptian *Hiſtory. The Antiquity and Authority of* Hermes Triſmegiſtus. *Of his Inſcriptions on Pillars, tranſcribed by* Manetho. *His Fabulouſneſs thence diſcovered.* Terra Seriadica. *Of* Seth's *Pillars in* Joſephus, *and an account whence they were taken.*

HAving already ſhewed a *general defect* in the *ancient Heathen Hiſtories*, as to an account of *ancient times*; we now come to a *cloſer*, and more *particular conſideration* of the *Hiſtories* of thoſe ſeveral *Nations* which have *born* the greateſt *name* in the world for *learning* and *antiquity*. There are four *Nations* chiefly which have *pretended* the moſt to *antiquity* in the *learned world*, and whoſe *Hiſtorians* have been thought to deliver any thing *contrary* to *Holy Writ* in their *account* of *ancient times*, whom on that account we are *obliged* more particularly to *conſider*; and thoſe are the *Phœnicians*, *Chaldeans*, *Ægyptians*, and *Grecians*; we ſhall therefore ſee what evidence of *credibility* there can be in any of *theſe*, as to the *matter* of *antiquity* of their *Records*, or the *Hiſtories* taken from them. And the *credibility* of an *Hiſtorian* depending much upon the *certainty* and *authority* of the *Records* he makes uſe of, we ſhall both conſider of what *value* and *antiquity* the pretended *Records* are, and particularly look into the *age* of the ſeveral *Hiſtorians*. As to the *Grecians*, we have ſeen already an utter *impoſſibility* of having any *ancient Records* among them, becauſe they *wanted* the *means* of *preſerving* them, having ſo lately *borrowed* their *Letters* from other *Nations*. Unleſs as to their *account* of *times* they had been as *carefull* as the old *Romans* were to number their *years* by the ſeveral *clavi*, or *nails*, which they fixed on the *Temple* doors: which yet they were not in any *Sect.* 1.

any *capacity* to do, not *growing* up in an entire body, as the *Roman Empire* did, but lying ſo much *ſcattered* and *divided* into ſo many petty *Republicks*, that they minded very little of concernment to the whole *Nation*. The other three Nations have deſervedly a name of far greater *antiquity* than any the *Græcians* could ever pretend to; who yet were unmeaſurably guilty of an impotent *affectation* of antiquity; and *arrogating* to themſelves, as *growing* on their own *ground*, what was with a great deal of *pains* and *induſtry* gathered but as the *gleanings* from the *fuller harveſt* of thoſe *Nations* they reſorted to. Which is not only *true* as to the greateſt part of their *learning*, but as to the *account* likewiſe they give of *ancient times*; the *chief* and moſt *ancient Hiſtories* among them being only a *corruption* of the *Hiſtory* of the *elder Nations*; eſpecially *Phœnicia* and *Ægypt*: for of theſe two *Philo Byblius* the *Tranſlator* of the ancient *Phœnician* Hiſtorian *Sanchoniathon*, ſaith, they were

Apud Euſeb. præp. Evang. l. 1. c. 8. p. 23. Ed. R. St.

πολαιότατοι σὺν Βαρβάρων, παρ' ὧν καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ παρέλαβον ἄνθρωποι, *The moſt ancient of all the Barbarians, from whom the others derived their Theology*; which he there particularly inſtanceth in.

Sect. 2. We begin therefore with the *Phœnician Hiſtory*, whoſe moſt ancient and famous *Hiſtorian* is *Sanchoniathon*, ſo much admired and made uſe of by the ſhrewdeſt *antagoniſt* ever *Chriſtianity* met with, the *Philoſopher Porphyrius*. But therein was ſeen the wonderfull Providence of God, that out of this *eater* came forth *meat*, and out of the *Lion*, *honey*; that the moſt conſiderable *teſtimonies* by him produced againſt our *Religion*, were of the greateſt *ſtrength* to refute his *own*. For he being of too great *Learning* to be *ſatisfied* with the vain *pretences* of the *Græcians*, he made it his *buſineſs* to ſearch after the moſt *ancient Records*, to find out ſomewhat in them to *confront* with the *antiquity* of the *Scriptures*; but upon his ſearch could find none of greater *veneration* than the *Phœnician Hiſtory*, nor any Authour contending for age with this *Sanchoniathon*. Yet when he had made the moſt of his *Teſtimony*, he was fain to yield him *younger* than *Moſes*, though he ſuppoſeth him elder than the *Trojan* Wars. And yet herein was he guilty of a moſt groſs ἀνηκοΐα, not much exceeding the *Græcians* in his *skill* in *Chronology*, when he makes *Semiramis co-exiſtent* with the Siege of *Troy*: as is evident in his *teſtimony* produced at large by

by *Eusebius* out of his *fourth Book* against the *Christians*; nay, he goes to prove the truth of *Sanchoniathon*'s History by the agreement of it with that of *Moses* concerning the *Jews*, both as to their names and places, ἱστορεῖ δὲ καὶ περὶ Ἰουδαίων ἀληθῆ τὰ ὅτε καὶ τοῖς τόποις καὶ τοῖς ὀνόμασιν αὐτῶν τὰ συμφωνότατα: whereby he doth evidently *assert* the greater *Truth* and *Antiquity* of *Moses* his *History*, when he proves the truth of *Sanchoniathon*'s from his consonancy with that. *Prep. Evang. l. 10. c. 8. p. 285.*

Two things more *Porphyrie* insists on to manifest his *credibility*; the one I suppose *relates* to what he reports concerning the *Jews*, the other concerning the *Phœnicians* themselves. For the *first*, that he made use of the Records of *Jerom-baal* the Priest of the *God Ieuo*, or rather *Iao*; for the other, that he used all the *Records* of the several *Cities*, and the sacred *Inscriptions* in the *Temples*. Who that *Jerom-baal* was, is much discussed among *learned men*, the finding out of which, hath been thought to be the most certain *way* to determine the *age* of *Sanchoniathon*. The learned *Bochartus* conceives him to be *Gideon*, who in *Scripture* is called *Jerub-baal*, which is of the same *sence* in the *Phœnician* language, only after their *custom* changing one *b* into *m*, as in *Ambubaja Sambuca*, &c. But admitting the *conjecture* of this *learned person* concerning *Jerub-baal*, yet I see no *necessity* of making *Sanchoniathon* and him *cotemporary*; for I no where find any thing mentioned in *Porphyrie* implying that, but only that he made *use* of the *Records* of *Jerub-baal*, which he might very probably *do* at a considerable *distance* of *time* from him, whether by those ὑπομνήματα, we mean the *Annals* written by him, or the *Records* concerning his *actions*; either of which might give *Sanchoniathon* considerable *light* into the *history* either of the *Israelites* or *Phœnicians*. And it is so much the more probable, because presently after the death of *Gideon*, the *Israelites* worshipped *Baal-berith*; by which most probably is meant the *Idol* of *Berith* or *Berytus*, the place where *Sanchoniathon* lived; by which means the *Berytians* might come easily acquainted with all the remarkable passages of *Jerub-baal*. *Sect. 3.* *Geogr. Sacr. p. 2. l. 2. c. 17.* Judg. 8. 33.

But I cannot conceive how *Sanchoniathon* could be *cotemporary* with *Gideon*, (which yet if he were, he falls 182 years short of *Moses*,) especially because the *building* of *Tyre*, which that *Author* mentions as an *ancient* thing (as hath been *Sect. 4.*

observed by *Scaliger*) is by our beſt *Chronologers* placed about the time of *Gideon*, and about 65 years before the *deſtruction* of *Troy*. I know *Bochartus*, to avoid this argument, hath brought ſome *evidence* of *ſeveral* places called *Tyrus* in *Phœnicia*, from *Scylax* his *Periplus*; but *none*, that there was any more than one *Tyrus* of any great repute for *antiquity*. Now this *Tyrus Joſephus* makes but 240 years elder than *Solomon*'s *Temple*, and *Juſtin* but one year elder than the *deſtruction* of *Troy*. Neither can any *account* be given why *Sidon* ſhould be ſo much *celebrated* by ancient *Poets*, as *Strabo* tells us, when *Tyre* is not ſo much as mentioned by *Homer*, if the famous *Tyre* were of ſo great *antiquity* and *repute* as is pretended. It cannot be denied but that there is mention in *Scripture* of a *Tyre* elder than this we ſpeak of, which we read of, *Joſhua* 19. 29. which ſome think to be that which was called *Palætyrus*, which *Strabo* makes to be 30 *furlongs* diſtant from the great *Tyre*; but *Pliny* includes *Palætyrus* within the circumference of *Tyre*, and ſo makes the whole *circuit* of the *City* to be 19 *miles*. It is not to me ſo certain to what place the name of *Palætyrus* refers, whether to any *Tyrus* before the firſt *building* of the great *Tyre*, or to the *ruines* of the great *Tyre* after its *deſtruction* by *Nebuchadnezzar*, compared with the new *Tyre*, which was built more *inward* to the *Sea*, and was after *beſieged* by *Alexander the Great*. It may ſeem probable that *Palætyrus* may relate to the *ruines* of the *great Tyre*, in that it was after included in its *circuit*, and chiefly becauſe of the *prediction* in *Ezekiel* 26. 4. *Thou ſhalt be built no more*; for the *Tyre* erected after, was *built* not on the *Continent*, but almoſt in the *Sea*. If ſo, then *Palætyrus*, or the *old* famous *Tyrus* might ſtand upon a *rock* upon the *brink* of the *Continent*, and ſo the great argument of *Bochartus* is eaſily anſwered, which is, *that after it is mentioned in* Sanchoniathon's *hiſtory, that* Hypſouranius *dwelt in* Tyre *upon the falling out between him and his brother* Uſous, Uſous *firſt adventured* εἰς θάλασσαν ἐμβῆναι, *to go to ſea*, which, ſaith he, *evidently manifeſts that the* Tyre *mentioned by* Sanchoniathon *was not the famous Inſular* Tyrus, *but ſome other* Tyre. This argument, I ſay, is now eaſily *anſwered*, if the famous *Tyre* before its *deſtruction* by *Nebuchadnezzar* did ſtand upon the *Continent*; for then it might be the old famous *Tyre* ſtill, notwithſtanding what *Sanchoniathon*

Not. in fragm. Græc. p. 40.

Antiq. l. 8.

Geogr. l. 16.

Hiſt. Nat. l. 5. *c.* 19.

choniathon speaks of the first venturing to *Sea* after *Tyre* was built. So then I conceive these several *ages* agreeable to the same *Tyre*; the *first was* when it was a high strong *rock* on the *Sea-side* without many *inhabitants*; so I suppose it was when mentioned by *Joshua* as the *bound* of the *tribe* of *Asher*. The *second* Age was, when it was *built* a great *City* by the *Sidonians* upon the former *place*, and grew very *populous* and *famous*, which lasted 'till *Nebuchadnezzar*'s time; after this, though it were never built up in the *Continent* again, yet a *little* farther into the *Sea*, a *new* and *goodly City* was *erected*, which was called *new Tyre*, and the *remains* on the *Continent* side *Palætyrus*. Thus far then we have made good *Scaliger*'s *opinion* against *Bochartus*, that the famous *Sanchoniathon* is not so *old* as he is pretended to be.

Which will be further *manifest*, if that *Abibalus*, to whom *Sanchoniathon* is supposed to *dedicate* his *History*, were the *Father* to *Hiram*, *co-temporary* with *Solomon*, as *Jos. Scaliger* supposeth, who was 154 years after the *destruction* of *Troy*. In the *Tyrian Dynasties* produced by *Scaliger* out of the *Phœnician Annals*, this *Abibalus* is the *first* who *occurs*, and is *co-temporary* with *David*: *Sanchoniathon* then is of no great *antiquity*, if this were the *time* he lived in. But *Bochartus* well observes, that it is not spoken of *Abibalus* King of *Tyre*, but of *Abibalus* King of *Berytus*, whom we may allow to be somewhat *nearer* the time of *Moses* than the other *Abibalus*, as the *Phœnician Annals* make it appear, as *Porphyrie* tells us; but yet we find his *antiquity* is not so *great* as to be able to contest with *Moses*, as *Porphyrie* himself confesseth, although we may freely acknowledge him to be far *elder* than any of the *Greek Historians*; which is all *Vossius* contends for, and sufficiently proves; but we are far from yielding him *co-temporary* with *Semiramis*, as *Porphyrie* would have him, and yet makes him *junior* to *Moses*, and to live about the time of the *Trojan* War, which is to reconcile the *distance* of near 800 years: such miserable *confusion* was there in the best learned *Heathens* in their *computation* of *ancient times*.

Sect. 5.

Nos. in Euseb. Chr. p. 12.

Canon. Isag. l. 2.

De hist. Græc. l. 1. *c.* 1.

Having thus cleared the *antiquity* of *Sanchoniathon*, and the *Phœnician* History, we are next to consider the *fidelity* of it. This *Sanchoniathon* is highly commended for, both by *Porphyrie*, and his *Translator* into *Greek*, *Philo Byblius*, who lived

Sect. 6.

in *Adrian*'s time; and *Theodoret* thinks his *name* in the *Phœnician language* ſignifies φιλαλήθης, which *Bochartus* endeavours to fetch from thence, and conceives the *name* to be given him when he ſet himſelf to write his Hiſtory; and he wiſheth, and ſo do we, that he had been then *vir ſui nominis*, and made it appear by his writing that he had been a *Lover of truth*. *Philo* ſaith he was ἀνὴρ πολυμαθὴς καὶ πολυπράγμων, *a very learned and inquiſitive man*; but either he was not ſo *diligent* to enquire after, or not ſo *happy* to *light* on any *certain records*; or if he did, he was not over-much a *Lover of truth*, in delivering them to the World. How *faithfull* he was in *tranſcribing* his *Hiſtory* from his *Records*, we cannot be ſufficient *Judges* of, unleſs we had thoſe *books* of *Taautus*, and the *ſacred Inſcriptions*, and the *Records* of *Cities*, which he pretends to take his *Hiſtory* from, to *compare* them together. But by what *remains* of his *Hiſtory*, which is only the firſt *book* concerning the *Phœnician Theology* extant in *Euſebius*, we have little reaſon to believe his *Hiſtory* of the *World* and *eldeſt times*, without further *proof* than he *gives* of it, there being ſo much *obſcurity* and *confuſion* in it, when he makes a *Chaos* to be the firſt *beginning* of all things, and the *Gods* to come after, makes the αὐτόχθων and γηΐνος the Son of *Chryſor* or *Vulcan*, and again the *man born* of earth to be ſeveral *generations* after αἰὼν and πρωτόγονος, who were the firſt mortal men; and yet from the two brethren τιτὴς and αὐτόχθων came *two Gods*, whereof one was called Ἀγρεύς, and the other Ἀγρέτης, and this latter was worſhipped with as much *veneration* as any of their *Gods*. Yet from theſe things, as *fooliſh* and *ridiculous* as they are, it is very *probable* the *Gnoſticks* and the ſeveral *ſubdiviſions* of them might take the riſe of their ſeveral *Æones* and *Cyzygiæ*: for here we find Αἰὼν and Πρωτόγονος made *two* of the number of the *Gods*, but the reſt of the *names*, they according to their ſeveral *Sects* took a liberty of altering, according to their ſeveral *fancies*. This is far more probable to me, than that either *Heſiod*'s Θεογονία ſhould be the *ground* of them; or the *opinion* of a late *German Divine*, who conceives that *Philo Byblius* did in *imitation* of the *Gnoſticks*, form this holy *ſtory* of the *Phœnician Theology*. For although I am far from believing what *Kircher* ſomewhere tells us, that he had once got a ſight of *Sanchoniathon*'s Original *Hiſtory* (it being not the firſt thing that *learned man* hath been deceived in,) yet I ſee no *ground* of

Joh. Urſinus Exerc. 3. ſect. 1.

ſo

so much *peevishness*, as because this *History* pretends to so much *antiquity*, we should therefore presently *condemn* it as a *figment* of the Translator of it. For had it been so, the *Antagonists* of *Porphyrie*, *Methodius*, *Apollinaris*, but especially *Eusebius*, so well versed in *antiquities*, would have found out so great a *cheat*: Although I must confess they were oft-times deceived with *piæ fraudes*; but then it was when they made for the *Christians*, and not *against* them, as this did. But besides a *fabulous confusion* of things together, we have some things delivered concerning their *Gods*, which are both contrary to all natural *notions* of a *Deity*, and to those very common *principles* of *humanity*, which all acknowledge. As when χειρῶ, or *Saturn*, suspecting his Son *Sadidus*, destroyed him with his own *hands*, and warr'd against his Father *Uranus*, and after destroyed him likewise, and buried his Brother *Atlas* alive in the earth; which being taken, as *Philo Byblius* contends they ought to be, in the *literal sence*, are such *incongruities* to all *notions* of a *divine nature*, that it is the greatest *wonder* there should be any that should believe there was any *God*, and believe these were *Gods* together.

But although there be so many gross *fables* and *inconsistencies* in this *Phœnician Theology*, that are so far from meriting *belief* in themselves, that it were a sufficient *forfeiture* of reason to say they were *credible*; yet when we have a greater *light* in our hands of *divine revelation*, we may in this *dungeon* find out many *excellent remainders* of the *ancient tradition*, though miserably *corrupted*, as concerning *the Creation*, *the Original of Idolatry*, *the invention of Arts*, *the foundation of Cities*, *the story of* Abraham, of which in their due place. That which of all seems the *clearest* in this *Theology*, is the open owning the *original* of *Idolatry* to have been from the *consecration* of some eminent *persons* after their *death*, who have found out some *usefull things* for the *world* while they were living: which the subtiller *Greeks* would not admit of, *viz.* that the *persons* they worshipped were once *men*, which made them turn all into *Allegories* and *Mystical sences* to *blind* that *Idolatry* they were *guilty* of the better among the *ignorant*: which makes *Philo Byblius* so very angry with the *Neoterick Grecians*, as he calls them, οἱς ἂν βεβιασμένως καὶ ἐκ ἀλληθῶς τὰς περὶ θεῶν μύθους ἐπ' ἀλληγορίας καὶ φυσικὰς δηγήσεις τε καὶ πραγείας ἀνάγων: *That with a great deal of force and straining they turned all the stories of the Gods* *Sect.* 7.

Apud Euseb. Præp. l. 1. *c.* 6. *p.* 23.

Gods into Allegories and Phyſical diſcourſes. Which is all the *Ingennity* that I know is to be found in this *Phœnician Theology*, that therein we find a free acknowledgment of the beginning of the *Heathen Idolatry:* and therefore *Sanchoniathon* was as far from advancing *Porphyrie*'s Religion, as he was in the leaſt from overthrowing the *credibility* of *Chriſtianity.*

Sect. 8. The next we come to then, are the *Ægyptians*; a people ſo unreaſonably given to *fables*, that the wiſeſt action they did, was to *conceal* their *Religion*, and the beſt office their *Gods* had, was to hold their *fingers* in their *mouths*, to command *ſilence* to all that came to *worſhip* them. But we deſign not here any ſet diſcourſe concerning the *vanity* of the *Ægyptian Theology*, which yet was ſo monſtrouſly ridiculous, that even thoſe who were over-run with the height of *Idolatry* themſelves, did make it the object of their ſcorn and laughter. And certainly had we no other demonſtration of the greatneſs of man's *apoſtaſie* and *degeneracy*, the *Ægyptian Theology* would be an *irrefragable evidence* of it: for who could but imagine a ſtrange lowneſs of ſpirit in thoſe who could fall down and worſhip the baſeſt and moſt contemptible of creatures! Their *Temples* were the beſt *Hieroglyphicks* of themſelves, *fair* and *goodly ſtructures* without, but within ſome *deformed creature* enſhrined for *veneration.* But though the *Ægyptians* had loſt their *credit* ſo much as to matters of *Religion*; yet it may be ſuppoſed, that they who were ſo famed for *wiſdom* and *antiquity*, ſhould be able to give a *full* and *exact account* of themſelves through all the *ages* of the *world.* And this they are ſo far from being *defective* in, that if you will believe them, they will give you an *account* of *themſelves* many *thouſands* of *years* before ever the *world* was *made*, but the peculiar *vanity* of their *Chronology* will be handled afterwards: That we now enquire into, is, what certain *Records* they had of their own *antiquity*, which might call for aſſent from any unprejudiced mind; whether there be any thing really anſwering that *loud* and *unparallel'd cry* of *antiquity* among the *Ægyptians*, whereby they will make all other *Nations* in compariſon of them, *to be but of yeſterday, and to know nothing.* We queſtion not now their *pretence* to *wiſdom* and *learning*, but are the more in *hopes* to meet with ſome *certain way* of *ſatisfaction* concerning *ancient times*, where *learning* is ſuppoſed to have flouriſhed ſo much, even when *Greece* it ſelf was accounted *barbarous.*

The

The great *Baſis* of all the *Ægyptian Hiſtory* depends on the credit of *their* ancient *Hermes*, whom out of their *veneration* they called *Triſmegiſtus*; for to him they *aſcribe* the *firſt invention* of their *learning*, and all excellent *Arts*; from him they *derive* their *hiſtory*; their famous Hiſtorian *Manetho*, profeſſing to tranſcribe his *Dynaſties* from the pillars of *Hermes*. We ſhall therefore *firſt* ſee of what *credit* and *antiquity Hermes* himſelf was, and of what account particularly thoſe *pillars* were which hold up all the *Fabrick* of *Manetho* his *Dynaſties*. For *Hermes* himſelf, the ſtory conncerning him is ſo various and uncertain, that ſome have from thence queſtioned whether ever there were ſuch a perſon or no, becauſe of the ſtrangely different account that is given of him. *Cotta* in *Tully*, in order to the eſtabliſhing his *academical* doctrine of *withholding aſſent*, mentions no fewer than five *Mercuries*, of which, two he makes *Ægyptian*, one of them the *Hermes* we now ſpeak of, whom the *Ægyptians* call *Thoyth*, and was the Author both of their *Laws* and *Letters*. The *Ægyptians*, as appears by *Diodorus*, *make him to be a ſacred Scribe to* Oſiris, *and to have inſtructed* Iſis; *and when* Oſiris *went upon any warlike expedition, he committed the management of affairs to him for his great wiſedom.* The *Phœnicians* preſerve his memory among them too: for *Philo Byblius* ſaith, *that* Sanchoniathon *deſcribed his Theology from the books of* Taautus, *whom the Ægyptians call* Thoyth, *who was the firſt inventer of Letters, and was a Counſellor to* Saturn, *whoſe advice he much relied on.* What now muſt we pitch upon in ſo great uncertainties? How come the *Phœnician* and *Ægyptian Theology* to come both from the ſame perſon, which are conceived ſo much to differ from each other? If we make the ſtories of *Oſiris* and *Iſis* to be fabulous, and merely *allegorical*, as *Plutarch* doth, then *Mercury* himſelf muſt become an *Allegory*, and the *Father* of *Letters* muſt be an *Hieroglyphick*. If we admit the *Ægyptians narrations* to be *real*, and ſeek to reduce them to *truth*, and thereby make *Oſiris* to be *Mitſraim* the ſon of *Cham*, who firſt ruled in *Ægypt*, all that we can then affirm of *Hermes* is, That he might be ſome *uſefull perſon*, who had a great influence both upon the *King* and *State*, and did firſt ſettle the Nation in a *politick way* of government, whoſe memory on that account the *Ægyptians* might preſerve with the greateſt *veneration*; and when

Sect. 9.

De Nat. Deor. l. 3.

when they were once fallen into that *Idolatry*, of consecrating the *memories* of the first *Contributers* to the *good* of *mankind*, they thought they had the greatest *reason* to adore his *memory*, and so by degrees attributed the *invention* of all *usefull things* to him. For so it is apparent they did, when *Iamblichus* teils *De Myst. l. 1.* *us the Ægyptians attributed all their books to* Mercury, *as the Father of them; because he was reputed the Father of wit and learning*, they made all the off-springs of their brains to bear their *Fathers* name. And this hath been the great *reason* the world hath been so long time imposed upon with *varieties* of *books* going under the name of *Hermes Trismegistus*. For he was not the *first* of his *kind*, who in the early days of the *Christian world* obtruded upon the world that *Cento* or confused mixture of the *Christian*, *Platonick*, and *Ægyptian doctrine*, which is extant still under the name of *Hermes Trismegistus*; whose vanity and falshood hath been sufficiently detected by learned men. There were long before his time extant several *Mercurial books*, as they were called, which none of the *wiser Heathens* did ever look on as any other than *fables* and *impostures*, as appears by *Porphyrie*'s letter to *Anebo* the *Ægyptian* Priest, and *Iamblichus* his answer to it in his Book of the *Ægyptian Mysteries*.

Sect. 10. We have then no certainty at all, notwithstanding the great *fame* of *Hermes*, of any certain *Records* of *ancient times*, unless they be contained in those *sacred inscriptions* from whence *Manetho* took his history. It must be acknowledged that the most ancient way of preserving any *monuments* of *learning* in those *elder times*, was by these *inscriptions* on *pillars*, especially among the *Ægyptians*, as is evident from the several testimonies of *Galen*, *Proclus*, *Iamblicus*, and the Authour of the Book cal- *Gal. l. 1. c. Jul. c. 1.* led *Sapientia secundum Ægyptios*, adjoyned to *Aristotle*, who all concurr in this, that whatever laudable *invention* they had a- *Procl. in Tim. p. 31.* mong them, it was *inscribed* on some *pillars*, and those *preserved* in their *Temples*, which were instead of *Libraries* to them. *Iamb. de myst. c. 2. s. 1.* *Manetho* therefore to make his story the more *probable*, pre- *Sap. c. 2. s. 1.* tends to take all his *relations* from these *sacred inscriptions*; and as *Eusebius* tells us, *translated* the whole *Ægyptian History* into *Greek*, beginning from their *Gods*, and continuing his History down near the time of *Darius Codomannus*, whom *Alexander* conquered: for in *Eusebius* his *Chronica* mention is made

made of *Manetho* his History, ending the 16th *year* of *Artaxerxes Ochus*, which, saith *Vossius*, was in the second year of the 107th *Olympiad*. This *Manetho Sebennyta* was *High Priest* of *Heliopolis*, in the time of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*, at whose requeſt he writ his Hiſtory, which he digeſted into three *Tomes*, the firſt containing the 11 *Dynaſties of the Gods* and *Heroes*; the ſecond, 8 *Dynaſties*; the third 12, all containing, according to his fabulous computation, the ſumm of 53535 years. Theſe *Dynaſties* are yet *preſerved*, being firſt *epitomized* by *Julius Africanus*, from him tranſcribed by *Euſebius* in his *Chronica*, from *Euſebius* by *Georgius Syncellus*, out of whom they are produced by *Joſ. Scaliger*, and may be ſeen both in *Euſebius*, and his *Canones Iſagogici*. *De Hiſt. Græc. l. 1. c. 14.*

Now *Manetho*, as appears by *Euſebius*, voucheth this as the main teſtimony of his *credibility*, that he took his *Hiſtory*, ἐκ τῶν ἐν τῇ Σηριαδικῇ γῇ κιόνων στηλῶν, ἱερᾷ διαλέκτῳ καὶ ἱερογλυφικοῖς γράμμασι κεχαραγμένων ὑπὸ Θωὺθ, τὸν πρῶτον Ἑρμῆν, καὶ ἐρμηνευθεισῶν, μετὰ τὸν Κατάκλυσμον ἐκ τῆς ἱερᾶς διαλέκτου εἰς τὴν ἑλληνίδα φωνὴν γράμμασιν ἱερογλυφικοῖς, καὶ ἀποτεθεισῶν ἐν βίβλοις ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀγαθοδαίμονος τοῦ δευτέρου Ἑρμοῦ, πατρὸς δὲ τοῦ Ταῦτ, ἐν ταῖς ἀδύτοις τῶν ἱερῶν διαγωγίων. *From ſome pillars in the Land of Seriad, in which they were inſcribed in the ſacred dialect by the firſt Mercury Tyth, and after the floud were tranſlated out of the ſacred dialect into the Greek tongue in Hieroglyphick Characters, and are laid up in books among the Reveſtries of the Ægyptian Temples, by Agathodæmon, the ſecond Mercury, the Father of Tat.* Certainly this fabulous Authour could not in fewer words have more *manifeſted* his own *impoſtures*, nor *blaſted* his own *credit* more than he hath done in theſe; which it is a wonder ſo many *learned men* have taken ſo little notice of, which have found frequent occaſion to ſpeak of *Manetho* and his *Dynaſties*. This I ſhall make appear by ſome great *improbabilities*, and other plain *impoſſibilities* which are couched in them. The improbabilities are, firſt ſuch *pillars*, being in ſuch a *plate* as *Seriad*, and that place no more ſpoken of either by himſelf, or by any other *Ægyptians*, nor any uſe made of theſe *inſcriptions* by any other but himſelf. As to this *terra Seriadica* where it ſhould be, the very *learned* and *inquiſitive Joſeph Scaliger* plainly gives out, and ingenuouſly profeſſeth his *ignorance*. For in his *notes* on the *fragments* of *Manetho* in *Euſebius*, when he comes *Sect. 11.*

to that ἐν τῇ γῇ Σηειρὰ ἰδίᾳ, he only ſaith, *Quæ nobis ignota quærant ſtudioſi.* But *Iſaac Voſſius*, is his late *Diſcourſes*, *De ætate mundi*, cries εὕρηκα, and confidently perſuades himſelf that it is the *ſame* with *Seirah*, mentioned, *Judges* 3. 16. Indeed were there nothing elſe to be conſidered but *affinity* of *names*, it might well be the ſame, but that פסילים, which we render the *ſtone-quarries*, ſhould ſignifie theſe *pillars* of *Mercury*, is ſomewhat hard to conceive. The *Seventy* render it, as himſelf obſerves, τὰ γλυπτὰ, by which they underſtand *graven Images*: So the word is uſed 2 *Chron.* 33. 19. *Deut.* 7. 5. *Iſa.* 10. 19. The *vulgar Latin* renders it, *ad locum Idolorum*, which were the certain *interpretation*, if *Chytræus* his conjecture were true, that *Eglon* had lately ſet up *Idols* there; but if it be meant of *pillars*, I cannot but approve of *Junius* his *interpretation*, which I conceive bids faireſt to be the *genuine ſenſe* of the *place*, *viz.* that theſe *ſtones* here, were the 12 *ſtones* pitched by *Joſhua* in *Gilgal* after the *Iſraelites* paſſed over *Jordan*; and theſe *ſtones* are ſaid to be by *Gilgal*, *Judges* 3. 19. So that notwithſtanding this handſome *conjecture*, we are as far to ſeek for the *pillars* of *Mercury* as ever we were, and may be ſo to the world's end. *Secondly*, the ſtanding of theſe *pillars* during the *floud*, which muſt be ſuppoſed certainly to have ſome ſingular virtue in them to reſiſt ſuch a *torrent* of *waters*, which overthrew the ſtrongeſt built houſes, and moſt *compacted Cities*; the plain *impoſſibilities* are *firſt*, that *Manetho* ſhould tranſcribe his *Dynaſties* from the beginning of the *Hiſtory* of *Ægypt*, to almoſt the time of *Alexander*, out of *ſacred Inſcriptions* of *Thoyth*, who lived in the beginning of the very firſt *Dynaſty* according to his own *computation*. Sure this *Thoyth* was an *excellent Prophet*, to write an Hiſtory for above 50000 *years* to come, as *Manetho* reckons it. *Secondly*, it is as well ſtill, that this Hiſtory after the floud ſhould be tranſlated into *Hieroglyphick Characters*; what kind of tranſlation is that? we had thought *hieroglyphicks* had been *repreſentations* of *things*, and not of *ſounds* and *letters*, or *words*: How could this *Hiſtory* have at firſt been written in any *tongue*, when it was in *hieroglyphicks*? Do *hieroglyphicks* ſpeak in ſeveral *languages*, and are they capable of changing their tongues? But, *thirdly*, it is as good ſtill, that the *ſecond Mercury* or *Agathodæmon* did tranſlate this Hiſtory ſo ſoon after the *floud* into

Not. in gr. Euſeb. p. 408. De æt. mund. c. 10.

Joſh. 4. 19, 20, 21.

into *Greek*: Was the *Greek tongue* so much in request so soon after the *flood*, that the *Ægyptian History* for the sake of the *Greeks* must be translated into their *language*? Nay, is it not evident from *Herodotus* and *Diodorus*, that the *Grecians* were not permitted so much as any commerce with the *Ægyptians*, till the time of *Psammeticus*, which fell out in the 26th *Dynasty* of *Manetho*, and about a Century after the *beginning* of the *Olympiads*. We see then how credible an Author *Manetho* is, and what truth there is like to be in the account of ancient times given by the *Ægyptian Historians*, when the chief of them so lamentably and ominously *stumbles* in his very entrance into it. *Herod. l. 2. Diod. l. c. 67.*

And yet as *fabulous* as this account is, which *Manetho* gives of his taking his *history* from these *pillars* before the *flood*, I cannot but think that *Josephus*, an Author otherwise of good *credit*, took his famous story of *Seth's pillars*, *concerning Astronomical observations before the flood*, from this story of *Manetho*; and therefore I cannot but look upon them with as *jealous* an eye as on the other, although I know how *fond* the world hath been upon that most *ancient monument*, as is pretended, of *learning* in the *world*. *Du Bartas* hath writ a whole *Poem* on these *pillars*, and the *truth* is, they are fitter *subjects* for *Poets* than any else, as will appear on these considerations. *First*, how strangely *improbable* is it, that the *posterity* of *Seth*, who, as is pretended, did foreknow a *destruction* of the *world* to be by a *flood*, should busie themselves to write *Astronomical observations on pillars*, for the benefit of those who should live after it? Could they think their *pillars* should have some peculiar *exemption* above stronger *structures*, from the *violence* of the *rough* and *furious waters*? If they believed the *flood* absolutely *universal*, for whom did they intend their *observations*? if not, to what end did they make them, when the persons surviving might *communicate* their inventions to them? But, *Secondly*, if either one or both these *pillars* remained, whence comes it to pass that neither the *Chaldeans*, nor any of the eldest Pretenders to *Astronomy*, should neither mention them, nor make any use of them? Nay, *Thirdly*, Whence came the *study* of *Astronomy* to be so lamentably *defective* in those ancient times, if they had such certain *observations* of the *heavenly bodies* gathered by so much experience of the persons who *Sect.* 12.

lived before the Floud? *Fourthly*, How comes *Josephus* himself to neglect this *remarkable testimony* of the *truth* of *Scripture-history* in his *books* against *Appion*, if he had thought it were such as might be relyed on? *Fifthly*, How comes *Josephus* so carelesly to set down the place in *Syria* where these *pillars* stood, that inquisitive persons might have satisfied themselves with the sight of the *pillar* at least, and what kind of *characters* those *observations* were preserved in? But now, if we compare this of *Josephus* with *Manetho* his story, we shall find them so exactly resemble each other, that we may well judge all those *pillars* to have been taken out of the same *quarry*. Two things make it yet more probable: *First*, The name of the place wherein they stood, which *Eustathius* in *Hexaemeron* takes out of *Josephus*, and calls Σηριαδὶ, the very same place with that in *Manetho*. The other is the common use of the name of *Seth* among the *Ægyptians*, as not only appears by *Plutarch de Iside & Osiride*, but by this very place of *Manetho*; where it follows, ἐν βίβλῳ Σώθεως, a book of his, bearing *the title which Vettius Valens Antiochenus* tells us is not called Σῶθις, but Σήθ. Now therefore *Josephus*, who frequently useth the *Testimony of Heathen Writers*, and frequently of this *Manetho*, endeavoured to bring this fabulous relation of *Manetho* as near the truth as he could; therefore instead of *Thoyth* he puts *Seth*, and the fabulous history of *Ægypt*, the inventions of the *Patriarchs*, and *Syria* instead of *Seriadica*, a Countrey too large to find these *pillars* in.

Apud Scaliger. not. Gr. p. 438.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the *Chaldean* History.

The contest of Antiquity among Heathen Nations, and the ways of deciding it. Of the Chaldean *Astrology, and the foundation of Judicial Astrology. Of the* Zabii, *their Founder, who they were, no other than the old* Chaldees. *Of* Berosus *and his History. An account of the fabulous* Dynasties *of* Berosus *and* Manetho. *From the Translation of the Scripture-history into Greek in the time of* Ptolomy. *Of that translation and the time of it. Of* Demetrius Phalerius. Scaliger's *arguments answered.* Manetho *writ after the Septuagint, proved against* Kircher; *his arguments answered. Of Rabbinical and Arabick Authours, and their little credit in matter of History. The time of* Berosus *enquired into; his writing co-temporary with* Philadelphus.

THE next whom our Enquiry leads us to, are the *Chaldeans*, a Nation of great and undoubted Antiquity, being in *probability* the *first formed* into a *National Government* after the *Flood*, and therefore the more *capable* of having these *Arts* and *Sciences* flourish among them, which might *preserve* the *memory* of *eldest times* to the view of *posterity*. And yet even among these who enjoyed all the *advantages* of *ease, quiet*, and a *flourishing Empire*, we find no *undoubted* or *credible Records* preserved, but the same *vanity* as among the *Ægyptians*, in *arrogating antiquity* to themselves beyond all *proportion* of *reason* or *satisfaction* from their own *history*, to fill up that vast *measure* of *time* with, which makes it most probable what *Diodorus* observes of them, *that in things pertaining to their arts they made use of Lunar years of* 30 *days*; so they had need, when *Tully* tells us that they boasted of *observations* of the Stars for 470000 years, which after *Diodorus* his *computation*, and the *vulgar account* of *years* from the *beginning* of the *world*, will fall near upon, if not *before* the *Creation*. It had been *impossible* for them to have been so *extravagant* in their *accounts* of themselves, had they but *preserved* the *History* of their *Nation* in any certain *Records*. For want of which, the *tradition*

Sect. 1.

Biblioth. l. 1.

De Divin. l. 1.

tradition of the *eldeſt times*, varying in the ſeveral *families* after their *diſperſion*, and being *gradually corrupted* by the *policy* of their *Leaders*, and thoſe *corruptions* readily embraced by the *predominancy* of *ſelf-love* in the ſeveral *Nations*, thence aroſe thoſe *vain* and *eager conteſts* between the *Chaldeans*, *Scythians*, *Ægyptians*, and *Æthiopians*, concerning the *antiquity* of their *ſeveral Nations*: which may be ſeen in *Diodorus*, and others: by which it moſt evidently appears that they had no *certain hiſtory* of their own *Nations*: for none of them inſiſt upon any *Records*, but only upon *ſeveral probabilities* from the *nature* of their *Country*, and the *Climates* they lived under. Neither need *Pſammeticus* have been put to that ridiculous way of deciding the *controverſie* by his two *infants* bred up without any *converſe* with men, concluding the *language* they ſpake would manifeſt the great *antiquity* of the *Nation* it belonged to: Whereas it is more than *probable* they had ſpoken none at all, had they not *learned* the *inarticulate voice* of the *goats* they had more converſe with than *men*. The making *uſe* of ſuch ways to decide this *controverſie* doth not only argue the great *weakneſs* of thoſe *times* as to *natural knowledge*; but the abſolute *defect* and *inſufficiency* of them, as to the giving any certain *account* of the *ſtate* of *ancient times*.

Sect. 2. Of which the *Chaldeans* had *advantages* above all other *Heathen Nations*, not only living in a ſetled *Country*, but *in* or *near* that very *place* where the grand *Anceſtors* of the *world* had their chief *abode* and *reſidence*. Whereby we ſee how *unfaithfull* a thing *Tradition* is, and how ſoon it is *corrupted* or *fails*, where it hath no ſure *records* to *bottom* its ſelf upon. But indeed it is the leſs *wonder* that *there* ſhould be a *confuſion of hiſtories*, where there had been before of *tongues*; and that ſuch whoſe deſign and *memory God* had *blaſted* before, ſhould afterwards *forget* their own *original*. But as if the *Chaldeans* had retained ſomething ſtill of their old aſpiring mind to reach up to *Heaven*, the only *thing* they were eminent for, and which they were *carefull* in *preſerving* of, was ſome *Aſtronomical obſervations*, which *Tully* tells us *they had a great conveniency for, by reaſon of the plain and even ſituation of their Country*; whereby they might have a larger *proſpect* of the *heavenly bodies*, than thoſe who lived in *mountainous Countries* could have. And yet even for this (which they were ſo famous for, that

that the name *Chaldeans* passed for *Astrologers* in the *Roman Empire*) we have no very great reason to admire their *excellency* in it, considering how soon their *skill* in *Astronomy* dwindled into that which by a great *Catachresis* is called *judicial Astrology*. The original of which is most evident among them, as all other *Heathen Nations*, to have been from the *Divinity* which they attributed to the *Stars*; in which yet they were far more *rational* than those who now admire that Art: For, granting their *hypothesis*, that the *Stars* were *Gods*, it was but *reasonable* they should determine *contingent effects*; but it is far from being so with them who take away the *foundation* of all those *celestial houses*, and yet attribute the same *effects* to them, which they did, who believed a *Divinity* in them. The *Chaldeans*, as *Diodorus* relates, set 30 *Stars* under the *Planets*; *L. 2. Biblioth.* these they called ἑυλαίους θεοὺς; others they had as *Princes* over these, which they called τῶν ἑυλαίων κωμας; *the former were as the privy Counsellors, and these the Princes over them, by whom in their courses they supposed the course of the year to be regulated.* We see then what a near *affinity* there was between *Astrology* and *the Divinity of the Stars*, which makes *Ptolomy* call them *Tetrab. l. 2.* *Atheists* who condemned *Astrology*, because thereby they destroyed the main of their *Religion*, which was the *worshipping* the *Stars* for *Gods*. But it seems by *Strabo*, that one of the *Geogr. l. 16.* *Sects* of the *Chaldeans* did so hold to *Astronomy* still, that they wholly rejected *Genethlialogy*, which caused a great division among the *Orchoeni* and the *Borsippeni*, two *Sects* among them, so called from the places of their habitations.

And if we reckon the *Zabii* among the *Chaldeans*, as *Maimonides* seems to do, we have a further evidence of the *Planetary Deities* so much in request among the *Chaldeans*; for the description he gives of them is to this purpose, *That they* *More Nevoch.* *had no other Gods but the Stars to whom they made statues and* *P. 3. c. 29.* *images, to the Sun golden, to the Moon silver, and so to the rest of the Planets of the Metals dedicated to them. Those Images derived an influence from the Stars to which they were erected, which had thence a faculty of foretelling future things*; which is *V. Scaliger. ep.* an exact description of the σημεῖα or *Talismans* so much in re- *ad Casaub. &* quest among the *Heathens*; such as the *Palladium* of *Troy* is *ep. Gallic. Sel-* supposed by learned men to have been. These *Talismans* are *den de Diis Syriis, l. 1. c. 2.* by the *Jews* called *David's bucklers*, and are much of the same *Salmas. de Ann.* nature *Climac. p. 578.*

Sect. 3.

nature with the ancient *Teraphim*, both being accurately made according to the *poſitions* of the *heavens*; only the one were to *fore-tell* future things, the other for the *driving* away ſome *calamity*. Concerning theſe *Zabii*, *Maimonides* tells us, *that the underſtanding their rites would give a great deal of light to ſeveral paſſages of Scripture which now lie in obſcurity*: but little is ſuppoſed to be yet further known of them than what *Scaliger* hath ſaid, that they were the more *Eaſtern Chaldeans*, which he fetcheth from the *ſignification* of the word; ſeveral of their books are extant, ſaith *Scaliger*, among the *Arabians*, but none of them are yet *diſcovered* to the *European* World. *Salmaſius* thinks theſe *Zabii* were the *Chaldeans* inhabiting *Meſopotamia*, to which it is very conſonant which *Maimonides* ſaith, that *Abraham had his education among them. Said Batricides*, cited by Mr. *Selden*, *attributes the original of their religion to the time of* Nahor, *and to* Zaradchath *the Perſian as the Authour of it*, who is conceived to be the ſame with *Zoroaſter*, who in all probability is the ſame with the *Zertooſt* of the *Perſees*, a Sect of the ancient *Perſians* living now among the *Banyans* in the *Indies*. Theſe give a more full and exact *account* concerning the *original*, *birth*, *education*, and *enthuſiaſms*, or *revelations* of their *Zertooſt*, than any we meet with in any *Greek Hiſtorians*; three books they tell us of which *Zertooſt* received by *Revelation*, or rather one book, conſiſting of three *ſeveral tracts*, whereof the firſt was concerning *judicial Aſtrology*, which they call *Aſtoodeger*; the ſecond concerning *Phyſick*, or the knowledge of *natural things*; the third was called *Zertooſt*, from the bringer of it, containing their religious rites; the firſt was committed to the *Jeſopps*, or *Magi's*, the ſecond to *Phyſicians*, the third to the *Darooes* or *Church-men*, wherein are contained the ſeveral precepts of their Law; we have likewiſe the rites and cuſtoms of theſe *Perſees* in their worſhip of fire, with many other particular rites of theirs publiſhed ſome time ſince by one Mr. *Lord*, who was a long time *reſident* among them at *Surrat*; by which we may not only underſtand much of the *Religion* of the ancient *Perſians*, but if I miſtake not, ſomewhat of the *Zabii* too. My reaſons are, becauſe the ancient *Zaradcha* or *Zoroaſter* is by *Said Batricides* made the Authour of the *Zabii*, as we have ſeen already, who was undoubtedly the founder of the *Perſian worſhip*,

De jure nat. & gent. l. 2. c. 7.

ship, or rather a promoter of it among the *Persians*; For *Ammianus Marcellinus* tells us that he was instructed in the rites of the *Chaldeans*, which he added to the *Persian* rites; besides, their agreement in the chief point of *Idolatry*, the *worship* of the *Sun*, and consequently the πυρεῖα or *Symbol of the Sun*, the *eternal fire*, is evident; which as far as we can learn, was the great and most early *Idolatry* of the Eastern Countries; and further we find God in *Leviticus* 26. 30. threatning to destroy their חמניכם *their Images of the Sun*, some render it; but most probably by that word is meant the πυρεῖα, *the hearths* where they kept their perpetual fire, for those are חמנים from חמה, which is used both for the *Sun* and *Fire*. Now hence it appears that this *Idolatry* was in use among the Nations about *Palestine*; else there had been no need of so severe a *threatning* against it, and therefore most probably the *rites* of the *Zabii* (which must help us to explain the reasons of some particular positive precepts in the *Levitical* Law relating to *Idolatry* are the same with the rites of the *Chaldeans* and *Persians*, who all agreed in this worship of the *Sun* and *Fire*; which may be yet more probable from what *Maimonides* saith of them, that *Gens Zabæa erat gens quæ implevit totum orbem*; it could not be then any obscure Nation, but such as had the largest *spread* in the *Eastern Countries*, which could be no other than the ancient *Chaldeans*, from whom the *Persians* derived their worship. It may not seem altogether improbable that *Balaam* the famous *South-sayer* was one of these *Zabii*, especially if according to *Salmasius* his judgment they inhabited *Mesopotamia*; for *Balaam*'s Country seems to be there; for it is said, *Numb.* 22. 5. *that he dwelt in Pethor by the river*, i. e. saith the *Chaldee Paraphrast*, *in Peor of Syria by Euphrates*, which in Scripture is called *the river*, Esa. 8. 7. But from this great *obscurity* as to the *history* of so ancient and so large a people as these *Zabii* are supposed to be, we have a further evidence to our purpose of the defectiveness and insufficiency of the Eastern Histories as to the giving any full account of themselves and their own original.

Hist. l. 23.

V. Voss. Idol. l. 2. *c.* 9.

We are told indeed by some, that *Nabonasser* did burn and destroy all the ancient Records of the *Chaldeans* which they had diligently preserved amongst them before, on purpose to raise

Sect. 4.

raiſe the greater reputation to himſelf, and blot out the *memory* of his *uſurpation*, by *burning* the *Records* of all their own *ancient Kings*. Which is a *conceit* I ſuppoſe hath no other ground than that the famous *Æra* ſo much celebrated by *Aſtronomers* and others, did bear the name of *Nabonaſſer*. Which (if we ſhould be ſo greedy of all empty *conjectures* which tend to our purpoſe as to take them for *truths*) would be a very ſtrong *evidence* of the *falſhood* and *vanity* of the *Chaldeans* in their great *pretences* to *antiquity*. But as the *caſe* ſtands in reference to their *Hiſtory*, we find more *evidence* from *Scripture* to aſſert their *juſt antiquity*, than ever they are able to *produce* out of any *undoubted records* of their own. Which yet hath been endeavoured by an *Authour* both of ſome *credit* and *antiquity*, the true *Beroſus*, not the *counterfeit* of *Annius*, whoſe *vizard* we ſhall have *occaſion* to *pull* off afterwards. This *Beroſus* was, as *Joſephus* and *Tatianus* aſſure us, *a Prieſt of* Belus *and a* Babylonian *born*, *but afterwards flouriſhed in the Iſle of* Co, *and was the firſt who brought the* Chaldean *Aſtrology in requeſt among the Greeks*; in honour to whoſe *name* and *memory*, the *Athenians* (who were never backward in *applauding* thoſe who brought them the greateſt *news*, eſpecially if *ſuitable* to their former *ſuperſtition*) *erected a ſtatue for him with a gilded tongue*. A good *emblem* of his *Hiſtory*, which made a *fair* and *ſpecious ſhew*, but was not that within, which it *pretended* to be: eſpecially where he *pretends* to give an *account* of the moſt *ancient times*, and *reckons* up his two *Dynaſties before the time of* Belus; but of them afterwards. It cannot be *denied* but ſome *fragments* of his *hiſtory*, which have *been preſerved* from *ruine* by the *care* and *induſtry* of *Joſephus*, *Tatianus*, *Euſebius* and others, have been very uſefull, not only for proving the *truth* of the *hiſtory* of *Scripture* to the *Heathens*; but alſo for *illuſtrating* ſome *paſſages* concerning the *Babylonian Empire*: as making *Nabopolaſſer* the *Father* of *Nebucadonoſor*, of which *Scaliger* hath fully ſpoken in his notes upon his fragments.

C. *App. l.* 1. c. *Græcos.*

Append ad l. de Emend. Temp.

Sect. 5. Far be it from me to *derogate* any thing even from *prophane hiſtories*, where they do not *enterfere* with the *ſacred Hiſtory* of *Scripture*; and it is certainly the beſt *improvement* of theſe to make them *draw water* to the *Sanctuary*, and to ſerve as ſmaller *Stars* to *conduct* us in our *way*, when we cannot enjoy the benefit

nefit of that greater *light* of *sacred History*. But that which I *impeach* these *prophane histories* of, is only an *insufficiency* as to that *account* of *ancient times*, wherein they are so far from giving *light* to *sacred Records*, that the *design* of *setting* of them *up* seems to be for *casting* a *cloud* upon them. Which may seem somewhat the more *probable* in that those *monstrous accounts* of the *Ægyptian* and *Chaldean Dynasties* did never publickly appear in the world in the *Greek* Tongue, 'till the time that our *sacred Records* were *translated* into *Greek* at *Alexandria*. For 'till that time when this *authentick history* of the *world* was drawn forth from its *privacy* and *retirement*, (being as it were *lockt* up before among the *Israelites* at *Judæa*) into the publick *notice* of the *world* about the time of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*, these vain *pretenders* to *antiquity* thought not *themselves* so much *concerned* to stand up for the *credit* of their own *Nations*. For 'till that time the *credulous world*, not being *acquainted* with any certain report of the *creation* and *propagation* of the *world*, was apt to *swallow* any thing that was given *forth* by those who were had in so great esteem as the *Chaldean* and *Ægyptian Priests* were: Because it was supposed that those *persons* who were freed from other *avocations*, had more *leisure* to *inquire* into these *things*; and because of their *mysterious* hiding what they had from the *vulgar*, were presumed to have a great deal more than they had. But now when the *Sun* of *righteousness* was *approaching* this *Horizon* of the *world*, and in order to that the *sacred History* like the *day-star* was to give the *world notice* of it, by which the former *shadows* and *mists* began to *fly* away, it concerned all those whose *interest* lay in the former *ignorance* of *mankind*, as much as they could to *raise* all their *ignes fatui*, and whatever might *tend* to *obscure* that *approaching light*, by *invalidating* the *credit* of that which came to *bespeak* its *acceptance*.

It is very *observable* to consider what *gradations* and *steps* there were in the *world* to the *appearance* of that *grand light* which came down from *heaven* to direct us in our *way* thither; how the *world* not long before was *awakened* into a greater *inquisitiveness* than ever before, how *knowledge* grew into *repute*, and what *methods divine providence* used to give the *inquisitive world* a *taste* of *Truth* at present to stay their *Sect.* 6.

ſtomachs, and prepare them for that further *diſcovery* of it afterwards. In order to this that *Nation* of the *Jews* which was *an incloſed garden* before, was now *thrown open*, and many of the *plants* removed and ſet in Foreign *Countries*, not only in *Babylon* (where even after their return were left three famous *Schools* of *learning*, *Sura*, *Pombeditha*, and *Nehardæ*) but in *Ægypt* too, where multitudes of them by *Alexander*'s favour were ſettled at *Alexandria*, where they had *opportunity* to *ſeaſon* thoſe two great *fountains*, whence the *current* of knowledge *ran* into the *reſt* of the *world*. And now it was not in *Jewry* only *that God was known*, but he *whoſe name was great in Iſrael*, did make way for the *knowledge* of himſelf among all the *Nations* of the *earth*. And that All-wiſe *God* who directed the *Magi by a ſtar to Chriſt*, making uſe of their former skill in *Aſtronomy* to take notice of that *ſtar* which came now on a peculiar *errand* to them to lead them to their *Saviour* (The great *God* condeſcending ſo far to *mankind*, as to take advantage of particular *inclinations*, and to *accommodate* himſelf to them; for which purpoſe it is very obſervable that he *appeared* in another way to the *Wiſe men*, than to the *poor Shepherds*) the ſame *God* made *uſe* of the *curioſity* and *inquiſitiveneſs* after *knowledge*, which was in *Ptolomæus Philadelphus* (which he is ſo much applauded for by *Athenæus* and others) to bring to *light* the moſt advantageous *knowledge* which the world ever had before the coming of Chriſt *in the fleſh*. And that great *Library* of his erecting at *Alexandria* did never deſerve that title 'till it had lodged thoſe *ſacred Records*, and then it did far better than the old one of *Oſymanduas*, of which *Hiſtorians* tell us this was the *Inſcription* Ἰατρεῖον ψυχῆς. *The ſhop of the ſouls Phyſick.*

V. Caſaub. ad. in Athenæum, l. 5. c. 9.

Sect. 7. But this being a matter of ſo much *concernment* in order to our better underſtanding the original of theſe *vaſt accounts* of *time* among the *Chaldeans* and *Ægyptians*, and a *ſubject* not yet *touched* by any, we ſhall a little further *improve* the *probability* of it, by taking a more particular *account* of the *time* when the *Scriptures* were firſt *tranſlated*, and the *occaſion* might thereby be given to theſe *Ægyptians* and *Chaldeans* to produce their *fabulous account* into the view of the world. Whether the *Scriptures* had been ever before *tranſlated* into the *Greek language*, (though it be aſſerted by ſome ancient

ancient *Writers* of the *Church*,) is very *questionable*, chiefly upon this *account*, that a sufficient *reason* cannot be assigned of undertaking a new *translation* at *Alexandria* if there had been any extant before. *Especially* if all those *circumstances* of that *translation* be true which are commonly received and delivered down to us with almost an *unanimous consent* of the *persons* who had greater *advantages* of knowing the *certainty* of such things, than we can have at this great *distance* of time. And therefore certainly every petty *conjecture* of some *modern*, though *learned* men, ought not to bear *sway* against so unanimous a *tradition* in a *matter* of *fact*, which cannot be capable of being proved but by the *testimony* of former ages. And it is somewhat strange that the single testimony of one *Hermippus* in *Diogenes Laertius* (whose age and authority is somewhat doubtfull) concerning only one particular referring to *Demetrius Phalereus*, should be thought of force enough among persons of *judgment* as well as *learning*, to infringe the *credibility* of the whole *story* delivered with so much *consent*, not only by *Christian*, but *Jewish Writers*; the testimony of one of which (every whit as considerable as *Hermippus*) viz. *Aristobulus Judæus* a *Peripatetical Philosopher* in an Epistle to *Ptolomy Philometor* doth plainly assert that which was so much questioned, concerning *Demetrius Phalereus*.

Vit. Demetrii.

Apud Euseb. præp. Evang. l. 13.

But whatever the *truth* of all the particular *circumstances* be, which I here *enquire* not after, nor the *authority* of that *Aristeus* from whom the story is received, nor whether this *translation* was made by *Jews* sent out of *Judæa*, or by *Jews* residing at *Alexandria*; it sufficeth for our purpose that this *translation* was made before either the *Chaldean Dynasties* of *Berosus*, or the *Ægyptian* of *Manetho*, were published to the *World*. In order to which it is *necessary* to shew in what time this *translation* was *effected*; and herein that *channel* of *tradition* which conveys the *truth* of the *thing* in one certain *course*, *runs* not with so even a *stream* concerning the exact *time* of it; all indeed agree that it was about the time of *Ptolemæus Philadelphus*, but in what *years* of his *reign*, is very dubious. *Joseph Scaliger* who hath *troubled the waters* so much concerning the particular *circumstances* of this *translation*, yet fully agrees that it was done in the time of 1734.

Sect. 8.

Animad. ad Num. Euseb.

of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*; only he contends with *Africanus* that it ſhould be done in the 132d. *Olympiad*, which is in the 33d. *year* of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*; but *Euſebius* and *Jerom* place it in the very beginning of his reign, which I think is far more probable, and that in the time when *Ptolomæus Philadelphus* reigned with his *Father Ptolomæus Lagi*: for ſo it is moſt certain he did for *two years* before his *father's* death. By which means the great *difficulty* of *Scaliger* concerning *Demetrius Phalereus* is quite taken off; for *Hermippus* ſpeaks nothing of *Demetrius* his being out of *favour* with *Philadelphus* during his *father's life*, but that upon his *father's death*, he was *baniſhed* by him, and dyed in his *baniſhment*; ſo that *Demetrius* might have the overſight of the *Library* at *Alexandria*, and be the main inſtrument of *promoting* this *tranſlation*, and yet thoſe things be after true which *Hermippus* ſpeaks, *viz.* When *Ptolomæus Lagi* or *Soter* was now dead For it *ſtands* not to reaſon that during his *father's* life *Philadelphus* ſhould *diſcover* his *diſpleaſure* againſt *Demetrius*, it being *conceived* upon the *advice* given to his *father* for preferring the Sons of *Arſinoe* to the *Crown* before the Son of *Berenice*. Moſt likely therefore it is that this *tranſlation* might be begun by the means of *Demetrius Phalereus* in the time of *Philadelphus* his *reigning* with his *father*, but, it may be, not finiſhed till after the death of *Soter*, when *Philadelphus* reigned alone. And by this now we can perfectly *reconcile* that *difference* which is among the *fathers* concerning the time when this *tranſlation* was made. For *Irenæus* attributes it to the time of *Ptolomæus Lagi*. *Clemens Alexandrinus* queſtions whether in the time of *Lagi* or *Philadelphus*; the reſt of the *Chorus* carry it for *Philadelphus*; but the words of *Anatolius* in *Euſebius* caſt it fully for both; for there, ſpeaking of *Ariſtobulus*, he ſaith, *he was one of the Seventy who interpreted the Scriptures to* Ptolomæus Philadelphus *and his Father, and dedicated his Commentaries upon the Law to both thoſe Kings. Hæc ſane omnem ſcrupulum eximunt*, ſaith *Voſſius* upon producing this teſtimony, *this puts it out of all doubt*; and to the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks the learned *Jeſuite Petavius* in his Notes on *Epiphanius*.

V. Scaliger. ib. Theocrit. Schol. ad Idol. 17. Juſtin. l. 16. Euſeb. Chr. gr.

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 7. c. 26.

De Hiſt. Græc. l. 1. cap. 12. pag. 380.

Having thus far cleared the time when the *tranſlation* of the *Scriptures* into *Greek* was made, we ſhall find our *conjecture* much *ſtrengthned*, by *comparing* this with the *age* of the

Sect. 9.

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fore-mentioned *Hiſtorians*, *Manetho* and *Beroſus*. *Manetho* we have already made appear to have lived in the time of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*, and that, ſaith *Voſſius*, after the death of *Soter*. It is evident from what remains of him in *Euſebius* his *Chronica*, that he not only flouriſhed in the time of *Philadelphus*, but writ his *hiſtory* at the ſpecial *command* of *Philadelphus*, as manifeſtly appears by the *remaining Epiſtle* of *Manetho* to him, ſtill extant in *Euſebius*. This command of *Philadelphus* might very probably be occaſioned upon the *view* of that *account*, which the *Holy Scriptures*, being then tranſlated into *Greek*, did give of the *world*, and the *propagation* of *mankind*; upon which, we cannot *imagine* but ſo *inquiſitive* a perſon as *Philadelphus* was, would be very earneſt to have his *curioſity* ſatisfied, as to what the *Ægyptian Prieſts* (who had boaſted ſo much of antiquity) could produce to *confront* with the *Scriptures*. Whereupon the task was undertaken by this *Manetho*, *High-Prieſt of Heliopolis*, whereby thoſe things which the *Ægyptian Prieſts* had to that time kept ſecret in their *Cloiſters*, were now *divulged* and *expoſed* to the *judgment* of the *learned world*; but what *ſatisfaction* they were able to give *inquiſitive* minds, as to the main ζητούμενον, or, *matter enquired after*, may partly appear by what hath been ſaid of *Manetho* already, and by what ſhall be ſpoken of his *Dynaſties* afterwards. *Chr. Gr. p 6.*

But all this will not perſuade *Kircher*; for, whatever *Scaliger*; nay, what *Manetho* himſelf ſaith to the contrary, he, with the confidence and learning of a *Jeſuite*, affirms, That this *Manetho* is elder than *Alexander the great*. For theſe are his words, *Frequens apud priſcos hiſtoricos Dynaſtiarum Ægyptiacarum fit mentio, quarum tamen alium Authorem non habemus niſi Manethonem Sebennytam, Sacerdotem Ægyptium, quem ante tempora Alexandri, quicquid dicat Scaliger, in Ægypto floruiſſe comperio.* Certainly ſome more than ordinary evidence may be expected after ſo confident an affirmation; but whatever that perſon be in other undertakings, he is as unhappy a perſon in *Philology*, as any that have pretended ſo much acquaintance with it. One would think, he that had been *twenty years*, as he tells us himſelf, *courting* the *Ægyptian Myſteries* for compaſſing his *Oedipus*, ſhould have found ſome better *arguments* to prove an *aſſertion* of this nature, than merely the *teſtimony* *Oedip. Ægypt. To. 1. Synag. 1. c. 9.*

of

of *Joſephus*, the *Hebrew book Juchaſin*, and ſome *Arabick Writers*, not one of all which do mention the thing they are brought for, *viz. that* Manetho *was elder than* Alexander. All the buſineſs is, they quote him as an *ancient Writer*; but what then? The Author of the Book *Juchaſin* was *Abraham Zachuth*, a *Jew* of *Salamancha*, who writ in the year of our Lord 1505. and this Book was firſt printed at *Conſtantinople*, 1556. Might not this man then well mention *Manetho* as an ancient Writer, if he flouriſhed above 1600 years before him, in the time of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*? And what if ſome *Arabick* Writers mention him? Are they of ſo great antiquity and credit themſelves, that it is an evidence *Manetho* lived in *Alexander*'s time to be *praiſed* by them? It would be well, if *Kircher*, and other *learned men*, who think the *world* is grown to ſo great *ſtupidity*, as to believe every thing to be a *jewel* which is *far fetched*, would firſt aſſert and vindicate the *antiquity* and *fidelity* of their *Arabick* Authors, ſuch as *Gelaldinus*, *Abenephi*, and many others, before they expect we ſhould part with our more authentick *Records* of *Hiſtory* for thoſe fabulous relations which they are ſo full fraught withall. Were it here any part of my preſent buſineſs, it were an eaſie matter ſo to lay open the *ignorance*, *falſity*, and *fabulouſneſs* of thoſe *Arabians* whom that *Author* relies ſo much upon, that he could not be freed from a deſign to *impoſe* upon the *world*, who makes uſe of their *teſtimony* in matters of ancient times without a *Caveat*. I know none fit to believe theſe *Arabick* Writers as to theſe *things*, but thoſe who have *faith* enough to *concoct* the *Rabbins* in matter of *Hiſtory*. Of whom *Origen* ſaith, πόλλα μὲν τῶν Ἰουδαίων τῶν νῦν μύθοι καὶ λῆροι. Who are, as *Grotius* truly ſaith, *peſſimi hiſtoriæ Magiſtri*; *nam ex quo patria expulſi ſunt, omnis apud illos hiſtoria craſſis erroribus & fabulis eſt inquinata, quibus & proinde nihil credendum eſt, niſi aliunde teſtes accederent.* And, as *J. Caſaubon* paſſeth this *ſharp*, but *due cenſure* upon them, *Rabbinis ubi de Lingua Hebraica agitur & vocis alicujus proprietate, vel aliquo Talmudico inſtituto, merito à Chriſtianis tribui non parum; ubi vero à verbis venitur ad res, aut ad hiſtoriam, vel rerum antiquarum veteris populi explicationem, niſi falli & decipi volumus, nihil admodum eſſe illis fidei habendum. Sexcentis argumentis hoc facile probarem ſi id nunc agerem.* And in reference to their ancient rites

C. Gelſum, l. 2. *Annot. in* Mat. 24. 24.

Exercit. ad Baron. 16. S. 8.

rites as well as *history*, *Joseph Scaliger* hath given this *verdict* of them, *Manifesta est Judæorum inscitia, qui cum usu veterum rituum, etiam eorum cognitionem amiserunt, ut multa quæ ad eorum sacra & historiam pertinent, longe melius nos teneamus quam ipsi.* The same which these very *learned persons* say of *Rabbinical*, may with as much *truth* be said of these *Arabick* Writers, in matters of *ancient history*, which I have here inserted, to shew the reason why I have thought the *testimony* of either of these two *sorts* of persons so *inconsiderable* in the matter of our future discourse; which being *historical*, and that of the greatest *antiquity*, little relief is to be expected from either of them in order thereto. But to return to *Kircher*. It is freely granted, That *Josephus*, an Authour of *credit* and *age*, sufficient to give his opinion in this case, doth very frequently cite *Manetho* in his *Ægyptian History*; particularly in his learned *Books* against *Appion*; but where he doth give the least intimation of *Manetho* being elder than *Alexander*, I am yet to seek. But *Kircher* will not yet leave the matter so, but undertakes to give an account of the mistake; which is, That there were two *Manetho's* besides, and both *Ægyptians*, mentioned by *Suidas*; one a *Mendesian*, who writ of the *Preparation* of the *Ægyptian* κῦφι, a kind of *perfume* used by the *Ægyptian Priests*. The other a *Diospolitan*, who writ some *Physiological* and *Astronomical* Treatises, whose works he hears are preserved in the *Duke* of *Florence* his *Library*; and this was he (saith he) who lived in the *times* of *Augustus*, whom many by the *equivocation* of the *name* have *confounded* with the ancient *Writer* of the *Ægyptian Dynasties*. Is it possible so learned a *Jesuite* should discover so little judgment in so few words? For, *first*, who ever asserted the Writer of the *Dynasties* to have lived in the time of *Augustus*? Yet, *secondly*, if that *Manetho* whom *Suidas* there speaks of, lived in *Augustus* his time according to *Kircher*, then it must necessarily follow, that the *Compiler* of the *Dynasties* did: for it is evident to any one that looks into *Suidas*, that he there speaks of the same *Manetho*, for these are his words: Μανεθὼς ὁ ἐκ Διοσπόλεως ὁ Αἰγύπτιος, ὁ Σεβεννύτης φυσιολογικὰ, &c. Can any thing be more plain than that he here speaks of *Manetho Sebennyta*, who was the *Authour* of the *Dynasties*, though he might write other things besides, of which *Suidas* there speaks? But

De Emend. Temp. l. 6.

Kirchber very wisely, in translating *Suidas* his words, leaves out Σαβεννύτης, which decides the *controversie*, and makes it clear, that he speaks of the same *Manetho* of whom we have been discoursing. Thus it still appears that this *Manetho* is no elder than the time of *Ptolomy Philadelphus*, which was the thing to be proved.

Sect. 10. Now for *Berosus*, although the *Chaldeans* had occasion enough given them before this time, to produce their Antiquities by the *Jews* converse with them in *Babylon*; yet we find this Authour the *first* who durst adventure them abroad, such as they were, in *Greek*. Now that this *Berosus* published his History after the time mentioned, I thus prove. *Tatianus Assyrius* tells us that he writ the *Chaldaick History* in three Books, and dedicated them to *Antiochus*, τὸ μὲν Σέλευκον τέτρω, as it is read in the *fragment* of *Tatianus* preserved in *Eusebius*; but it must be acknowledged that in the *Paris edition* of *Tatianus*, as well as the *Basil*, it is thus read, καὶ Ἀλέξανδρον γεγονὼς, Ἀντιόχῳ τῷ μὲν αὐτὸν τέτρω, here it relates to the *third* from *Alexander*, in the other, to the *third* from *Selencus*; Now if we reckon the *third* so as to take the person from whom we reckon in, for the first, according to the reading in *Eusebius*, it falls to be *Antiochus* called Θεὸς, according to the other reading it falls to be *Antiochus Soter*; for *Seleucus* succeeded *Alexander* in the *Kingdom of Syria*; *Antiochus Soter*, *Seleucus*; *Antiochus* Θεὸς, *Antiochus Soter*. But according to either of these readings, our purpose is sufficiently proved. For *Antiochus Soter* began to reign in *Syria* in the *sixth* year of *Ptol. Philadelphus* in *Ægypt*; *Antiochus* Θεὸς succeeded him in the 22d. year of *Philadelphus*; now the soonest that the History of *Berosus* could come forth, must be in the reign of *Antiochus Soter*, which according to our accounts is some competent time after the *translation* of the Scripture into *Greek*; but if it were not till the time of *Antiochus* Θεὸς, we cannot but imagine that the report of the account of *ancient times* in the *Scriptures* was sufficiently *divulged* before the *publishing* of this *History* of *Berosus*; and, it may be, *Berosus* might somewhat sooner than others understand all *transactions* at *Alexandria*, because the place of his chief *residence* was where *Ptolomy Philadelphus* was born, which was in the *Isle of Co.* But *Vossius* goes another way to work, to prove the time of *Berosus*, which

Præp. Evang. l. 10. *p.* 289. *ed. Rob. Steph.*

V. Scal. de Emend. Temp. l. 5. *p.* 392.

De hist. Græc. l. 1. *c.* 13.

which is this. He quotes it out of *Pliny* that *Beroſus* recorded the Hiſtory of 480. years, which, *ſaith he*, muſt be reckoned from the *æra* of *Nabonaſſer*. Now this began in the *ſecond* year of the 8th. *Olympiad*, from which time if we reckon 480 *years*, it falls upon the latter end of *Antiochus Soter*; and ſo his Hiſtory could not come out before the 22d. of *Ptolomy Philadelphus*, or very little before. Thus we have made it evident, That theſe two great *Hiſtorians* are *younger* even than the *tranſlation* of the *Bible* into *Greek*, by which it appears probable that they were *provoked* to publiſh their *fabulous Dynaſties* to the world. And ſo much to ſhew the *inſufficiency* of the *Chaldean* Hiſtory, as to the account of ancient times: Which we ſhall conclude with the cenſure of *Strabo*, a grave and judicious Authour, concerning the *antiquities* of the *Perſians*, *Medes*, and *Syrians*, *which*, ſaith he, *have not obtained any great credit in the world*, διὰ τὸ τῶν συγγραφέων ἁπλό-πλα καὶ φιλομυθίαν, *becauſe of the ſimplicity and fabulouſneſs of their Hiſtorians*. From hence we ſee then that there is no great *credibility* in thoſe Hiſtories, which are impeached of falſhood by the moſt *grave* and *judicious* of *Heathen* Writers.

Plin. hiſt. nat. l. 7. c. 56.

Geogr. l. 11.

CHAP. IV.

The defect of the *Grecian* Hiſtory.

That manifeſted by three evident arguments of it. 1. *The fabulouſneſs of the Poetical age of* Greece. *The Antiquity of Poetry. Of* Orpheus *and the ancient Poets. Whence the Poetical Fables borrowed. The advancement of Poetry and Idolatry together in* Greece. *The different cenſures of* Strabo *and* Eratoſthenes *concerning the Poetical age of* Greece; *and the reaſons of them.* 2. *The eldeſt Hiſtorians of* Greece *are of ſuſpected credit. Of* Damaſtes, Ariſteus, *and others; of moſt of their eldeſt Hiſtorians we have nothing left but their names, of others only the ſubjects they treated of, and ſome fragments.* 3. *Thoſe that are extant either confeſs their Ignorance of eldeſt times, or plainly diſcover it. Of the firſt ſort are* Thucydides *and* Plutarch; *ſeveral evidences of the* Grecians *Ignorance of the true original of Nations. Of* Herodotus *and his miſtakes; the* Greeks *Ignorance in Geography diſcovered, and thence their inſufficiency as to an account of ancient Hiſtory.*

Sect. 1. DEſcend we now to the Hiſtory of *Greece*; to ſee whether the *Metropolis* of *Arts* and *Learning* can afford us any *account* of *ancient times*, that may be able to make us in the leaſt queſtion the account given of them in *ſacred Scriptures*. We have already manifeſted the *defect* of *Greece* as to *letters* and *ancient records*, but yet it may be *pretended* that her *Hiſtorians* by the excellency of their *wits* and ſearching abroad into other Nations, might find a more certain *account* of *ancient times*, than other Nations could obtain. There is no body, who is any thing acquainted with the *Grecian* humour, but will ſay they were beholding to their *wits* for moſt of their Hiſtories; they being ſome of the earlieſt writers of *Romances* in the world, if all *fabulous narrations* may bear that name. But laying aſide at preſent all their *Poetick Mythology*, as it concerns their *Gods*, (which we may have occaſion to enquire into afterwards) we now examine only their *credibility*, where they pretend to be moſt *hiſtorical*. Yet how far

far they are from meriting belief even in theſe things, will appear to any that ſhall conſider; Firſt, *That their moſt ancient Writers were Poetical and apparently fabulous.* Secondly, *That their eldeſt Hiſtorians are of ſuſpected credit even among themſelves.* Thirdly, *That their beſt Hiſtorians either diſcover or confeſs abundance of ignorance as to the hiſtory of ancient times.* Firſt, *That their firſt Writers were Poetical, and apparently fabulous:* *Strabo* undertakes to prove that *Proſe* is only an imitation of *Poetry*, and ſo *Poetry* muſt needs be *firſt written. For*, ſaith he, *at firſt Poetry was only in requeſt, afterwards in imitation of that*, Cadmus, Pherecydes *and* Hecatæus *writ their hiſtories, obſerving all other laws of Poetry, but only the meaſures of it; but by degrees Writers began to take greater liberty, and ſo brought it down from that lofty ſtrain it was then in, to the form now in uſe: as the Comical ſtrain is nothing elſe but a depreſſing the ſublimer ſtyle of Tragedies.* This he proves becauſe ἄδειν did anciently ſignifie the ſame with φράζειν; for *Poems* were only λόγοι μεμελισμένοι, *Leſſons fit to be ſung* among them; thence, ſaith he, is the original of the ῥαψῳδίαι, &c. For theſe were thoſe *Poems* which were *ſung* ἐπὶ ῥάβδῳ when they *held a branch of Laurel in their hands*, as *Plutarch* tells us they were wont to do *Homer*'s *Iliads*; others were *ſung* to the *Harp*, as *Heſiod*'s ἔργα: beſides, ſaith *Strabo*, that *Proſe* is called ὁ πρὸς λύρᾳ, argues that it is only a bringing down of the higher *ſtrain* in uſe before. But however this were in *general*, as to the *Grecians*, it is evident that *Poetry* was firſt in *uſe* among them; for in their *elder times* when they firſt began to creep out of *Barbariſm*, all the *Philoſophy* and *Inſtruction* they had, was from their *Poets*, and was all couched in *verſe*; which *Plutarch* not only confirms, but particularly inſtanceth in *Orpheus*, *Heſiod*, *Parmenides*, *Xenophanes*, *Empedocles* and *Thales*; and hence *Horace de arte Poetica*, of the ancient *Poets* before *Homer*,

Geogr. l. 1.

Sympoſ.

De Pyth. Orac.

——*fuit hæc ſapientia quondam*
Publica privatis ſecernere, ſacra profanis:
Concubitu prohibere vago: dare jura maritis:
Oppida moliri: leges incidere ligno.
Sic honor & nomen divinis vatibus atque
Carminibus venit.

From

Differt. in Hes. cap. 6. From hence as *Heinsius* observes, the *Poets* were anciently called ᾀδόμενοι; and the ancient *speeches* of the *Philosophers* containing matters of *morality*, were called ἄσματα καὶ ἀδόμενα, of which many are mentioned in their *lives* by *Diogenes Laertius*; in the same sence were *Carmina* anciently used among the *Latines* for *precepts* of *morality*, as in that *collection* of them, which goes under the name of *Cato*, (which some think to be an ancient piece, but with a false inscription, but *Boxhornius* thinks it to be of some *Christians* doing in the decay of the *Roman Empire*,) *Si Deus est animus, nobis ut Carmina dicunt.* *Carmina*, saith *Heinsius*, i. e. *dicta Philosophorum*; *causa est, quia dicta illa brevia, quibus sententias suas de Deo deque reliquis includebant, ἀδόμενα dicebant*, i. e. *Carmina.*

Quæst. Rom. c. 14.

Sect. 2. When *Poetry* came first into request among the *Grecians*, is somewhat uncertain; but this is plain and evident, that the intention of it was not meerly for instruction, but as *Strabo* expresseth it, ψυχαγωγεῖν καὶ κατηγεῖν τὰ πλήθη, *the more gently to draw the people on to Idolatry.* For as he saith, *it is impossible to perswade women and the promiscuous multitude to religion by meer dry reason or Philosophy*, ἀλλὰ δεῖ καὶ δεισιδαιμονίας τινὸς· ἣν ἄνευ μυθοποιΐας καὶ πατείας; *but for this*, saith he, *there is need of superstition, and this cannot be advanced without some fables and wonders.* For, saith he, *the Tunderbolts, Shields, Tridents, Serpents, Spears attributed to the Gods, are meer fables, and so is all the ancient Theology; but the Governours of the Commonwealth made use of these things, the better to awe the silly multitude, and to bring them into better order.* I cannot tell how far this might be their end, since these things were not brought in so much by the several *Magistrates*, as by the endeavour of particular men, who thought to raise up their own *esteem* among the *vulgar* by such things, and were *imployed* by the great *deceiver* of the *world* as his *grand instruments* to advance *Idolatry* in it. For which we are to consider, that although there were gross *Ignorance*, and consequently *Superstition* enough in *Greece* before the *Poetick age* of it, yet their *Superstitious* and *Idolatrous worship* was not so *licked* and brought into *form*, as about the time of *Orpheus*, from whom the *Poetick age* commenceth: who was as great an *instrument* of setting up *Idolatry*, as *Apollonius* was afterwards of *restoring* it, being both *persons* of the highest *esteem* and *veneration* among the *heathen.*

Geogr. l. 1. p. 13.

heathen. Much about the same time did those live in the world who were the first great promoters of *Superstition* and *Poetry*, as *Melampus*, *Musæus*, *Arion Methymnæus*, *Amphion* of *Thebes*, and *Eumolpus Thrax*, none of whom were very far distant from the time of *Orpheus*. Of whom *Clemens Alexandrinus* thus speaks, σεσχήκασι μυσικῆς λυμηνάμενοι τὸν βίον ἐν πέπλοις καὶ γοητείαις—τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ὅτι τὰ εἴδωλα χειραγωγοῦσι πρῶτοι. *These under a pretence of Musick and Poetry corrupting the lives of men, did by a kind of artificial Magick draw them on to the practice of Idolatry.* For the novelty and pleasingness of *Musick* and *Poetry* did presently insinuate its self into the minds of men, and thereby drew them to a *venerable esteem* both of the persons and practices of those who were the Authours of them. So *Conon* in *Photius* tells us that *Orpheus* was exceedingly acceptable to the people for his skill in *Musick*, which the *Thracians* and *Macedonians* were much delighted with: From which arose the *Fable* of his *drawing trees* and *wild beasts* after him, because his *Musick* had so great an influence upon the *civilizing* that people, who were almost grown rude through *Ignorance* and *Barbarism*: and so *Horace* explains it,

Protreptic. p. 3.

Phot. Bibliothec. Cod. 186. fect. 45

Sylvestres homines sacer, interpresque Deorum,
Cædibus & victu fœdo deterruit Orpheus,
Dictus ob hoc lenire Tigres rapidosque Leones.

Ep. ad Pison.

This *Orpheus* by *Mythologists* is usually called the *son of Calliope*, but may with better reason be called the *father of the whole Chorus* of the *Muses*, than the son of one of them, since *Pindar* calls him πατέρα ἀοιδᾶς, and *John Tzetzes* tells us he was called the *son of Calliope*, ὡς καλλιλογίας ποιητικῆς εὑρετὴς καὶ ὕμνων θεῶν εἰς τοὺς θεούς, *as the inventor of Poetical elegancy, and the sacred Hymns which were made to the Gods.* (Which the old Romans called *Assamenta*; and *Justin Martyr* calls him τὸν πολυθεότητα πρῶτον διδάσκαλον, *the first teacher of Polytheism and Idolatry.*

Schol. in Hesiod. p. 8.

Paranes. 1.

For this *Orpheus* having been in *Ægypt*, as *Pausanias*, *Diodorus*, and *Artapanus* in *Eusebius* all confess, he brought from thence most of the *Magical rites* and *superstitious* customs in use there, and set them up among the *Grecians*; so *Diodo-*

Sect. 3.

Paus. Eliac. 2. Diod. bibl. lib. 1. Euseb. Præp. l. 10.

Diodorus acknowledgeth in the ſame place; and is likewiſe evident by what *Ariſtophanes* ſaith in his βάτραχοι,

Act. 4. ſc. 2. Ὀρφεὺς μὲν γὰρ τελετὰς θ' ἡμῖν κατέδειξε
Φόνου τ' ἀπέχεσθαι.

Orpheus *firſt inſtructed them in the ſacred myſteries, and to abſtain from ſlaughter:* which is to be underſtood of the θυσίαι, *the killing of beaſts in ſacrifice*, which probably was in *uſe* among them before, as a remainder of ancient tradition, till *Orpheus* brought his *Ægyptian* doctrine into requeſt among them. The *myſteries* of *Oſiris*, ſaith *Diodorus*, were tranſplanted into *Greece* under the name of *Dionyſius* or *Bacchus*, and *Iſis* under *Ceres* or *Magna Mater*, and the *puniſhment* and *pleaſures* after this life from the *rites* of *ſepulture* among them; *Charon*'s wafting of ſouls from the lake *Acheruſia* in *Ægypt*, over which they were wont to ſend the dead bodies. *Pauſanias* tells us, that *Lacon. p. 95.* the *Spartans* derived the worſhip of *Ceres Cthonia* from *Or-* *Corinth. p. 72.* *pheus*, and the *Æginatæ* the worſhip of *Hecate*. Beſides which *V.C. Rhod. Ant. Lect. l. 15. p. 9.* he inſtituted new *rites* and *myſteries* of his own, in which the *initiated* were called Ὀρφιοτελεσταί, and required a moſt ſolemn oath from all of them never to divulge them, which was after obſerved in all thoſe profane *myſteries* which in imitation of theſe were ſet up among the *Greeks*. *Strabo* thinks the *myſteries* of *Orpheus* were in *imitation* of the old *Cotyttian* *Geogr. l. 10.* and *Bendidian myſteries* among the *Thracians*; but *Herodotus* with more probability parallels them and the *Dionyſian* with the *Ægyptian*, from which we have already ſeen that *Or-* *Interp. p. 134. Ed. H. St.* *pheus* derived his; who is conceived by *Georgius Cedrenus* and *Timotheus* in *Euſebius*, to have lived about the time of *Gi-* *V. Suidam in Orpho.* *deon* the *Judge* of *Iſrael*; but there is too great confuſion concerning his age, to define any thing certainly about it. Which ariſeth moſt from the ſeveral *perſons* going under his name, of which, beſides this, were in all *probability* two more; the one an *Heroick Poet*, called by *Suidas*, *Ciconæus*, or *Arcas*, who lived two Ages before *Homer*, and he that goes under the name of *Orpheus*, whoſe *Hymns* are ſtill extant, but are truly aſcribed to *Onomacritus* the *Athenian*, by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Tatianus Aſſyrius*, *Suidas*, and others, who flouriſhed in the times of the *Piſiſtratidæ* at *Athens*. We are like then

then to have little relief for finding out of *truth* in the *Poetick* Age of *Greece*, when the main deſign of the *Learning* then uſed was only to *inſinuate* the belief of *fables* into the People, and by that to awe them into *Idolatry*.

If we come lower down to the ſucceeding *Poets*, we may find *fables* increaſing ſtill in the times of *Homer*, *Heſiod*, and the reſt, which made *Eratoſthenes*, a Perſon of great *Judgement* and *Learning* (whence he was called *alter Plato*, and πένταθλος, and τὸ βῆτα, becauſe he carried, if not the *firſt*, yet the *ſecond* place in all kind of Literature) condemn the *ancient Poetry* as γεμώδη μυθολογίαν, *a company of old Wives tales*, which were invented for nothing but to pleaſe ſilly people, and had no real *learning* or *truth* at all in them. For this, though he be ſharply cenſured by *Strabo*, in his *firſt* Book, who undertakes to *vindicate* the *Geography* of *Homer* from the *exceptions* of *Eratoſthenes*; yet himſelf cannot but confeſs that there is a very great *mixture* of *fables* in all their *Poets*, *which is*, ſaith he, *partly to delight the people, and partly to awe them. For the minds of men being always deſirous of novelties, ſuch things do hugely pleaſe the natural humours of weak people*; *eſpecially if there be ſomething in them that is* θαυμαστὸν καὶ πεπλασμένον, *very ſtrange and wonderfull, it increaſeth the delight in hearing it*; ὅπερ δεῖ τὸ μανθάνειν φίλτρον, *which draws them on to a deſire of hearing more of it. And by this means*, ſaith he, *are children firſt brought on to learning, and all ignorant perſons are kept in awe*; *nay, and the more learned themſelves* (partly for want of reaſon and judgment, and partly from the remainder of thoſe impreſſions which theſe things made upon them when they were children) *cannot ſhake off that former credulity which they had as to theſe things*. By which diſcourſe of *Strabo*, though intended wholly by him in *vindication* of *poetick fables*, it is plain and evident what great *diſſervice* hath been done to *truth* by them, by reaſon they had no other *Records* to preſerve their *ancient Hiſtory* but theſe *fabulous Writers*, and therefore ſuppoſing a *mixture* of *truth*, and *falſhood* together, which *Strabo* contends for; yet what way ſhould be taken to diſtinguiſh the *true* from the *falſe*, when they had no other *certain Records?* and beſides, he himſelf acknowledgeth how hard a *matter* it is even for wiſe men to *excuſs* thoſe *fabulous narrations* out of

Sect. 4

their minds, which were *insinuated* into them by all the advantages which *prejudice*, *custom*, and *education* could work upon them. Granting then there may be some *truth* at the bottom of their *fabulous narrations*;

Odyss. 3. Ὡς δ' ὅτε τις χρυσὸν ἀργύρῳ ἀνήρ.

Which may be gilded over with some pleasant tales, as himself compares it; yet how shall those come to know that it is only *gilded*, that never saw any *pure metal*, and did always believe that it was what it seemed to be? Had there been any λιθίνιον, or *touchstone* to have differenced between the one and the other, there might have been some way for a *separation* of them; but there being none such, we must conclude, that the *fabulous narrations* of *Poets* instead of making *truth* more *pleasant* by their *fictions*, have so *adulterated* it, that we cannot find any *credibility* at all in their narrations of elder times, where the *truth* of the *story* hath had no other way of *conveyance* but through their *fictions*.

Sect. 5. But though *Poets* may be allowed their liberty for representing things to the greatest advantage to the *palates* of their Readers, yet we may justly expect, when men profess to be *historical*, they should deliver us nothing but what upon strictest examination may prove undoubted truth. Yet even this were the *Greeks* far from; for *Strabo himself* confesseth of their eldest *Historians*, Καὶ οἱ παλαιοὶ ὃ ἱστορικοὶ καὶ φυσικοὶ μυθόγραφοι, *their first Historians both of persons and things were fabulous.*

Geogr. l. 1. *Diodorus* particularly instanceth in their eldest Historians, as *Cadmus Milesius*, *Hecataeus*, and *Hellanicus*, and condemns them for fabulousness. *Strabo* condemns *Damastes Sigeensis* for vanity and falshood, and wonders at *Eratosthenes* for making use of him; yet this man is of great antiquity among them, and his testimony used by Authours of good credit, as *Dionysius Halicarnasseus*, *Plutarch*, and others. Nay, *Pliny* professeth to follow him, and so doth *Aristeas Proconnesius*, in his *Arimaspia*, which may render the credit of his History very suspicious; with whom it was a sufficient ground of credibility to any story, That he found it in some *Greek Authours*. *Strabo* reckons *Damastes* with *Euemerus Messenius* and *Antiphanes Bergius*; which latter was so noted a Lyar, that from

V. Casaub. in Strab. l. 1. Voss. de hist. Græc. l. 4. c. 5.

from him, as *Stephanus* tells us, βιγαίζειν was used as a Proverb for, *to speak never a word of truth.* *Aristeas Proconnesius* lived in the time of *Cyrus*, and writ a History of the *Arimaspi*, in *three* Books, who seems to have been the *Sir John Mandevil* of *Greece*, from his *stories* of the *Arimaspi*, with one eye in their foreheads, and their continual fighting with the *Gryphens* for gold; yet the story was taken upon trust by *Herodotus*, *Pliny*, and many others, though the experience of all who have visited those *Northern Climats*, do sufficiently refute these follies. *Strabo* saith of this *Aristeas*, that he was, ἀνὴρ γόης εἴ τις ἄλλος, *one inferiour to none for juggling*, which censure was probably occasioned by the common story of him, that he could let his soul out of his body when he pleased, and bring it again; yet this Juggler did *Celsus* pitch on to *confront* with our blessed *Saviour*, as *Hierocles* did on *Apollonius*; so much have those been to seek for reason, who have sought to oppose the doctrine of faith. πρὸ πολλοῦ βίγγειν. *Geogr. l.* 13.

But further, what *credit* can we give to those *Historians* who have striven to confute each other, and lay open one anothers falshood to the World. Where was there ever any such *dissonancy* in the sacred History of *Scripture?* doth the Writer of one Book discover the weakness of another? do not all the parts so exactly agree, that the most probable suspicion could ever fall into the heart of an *Infidel*, is, that they were all written by the same person, which yet the *series* of times manifests to have been *impossible?* But now, if we look into the ancient *Greek* Historians, we need no other testimony than themselves to take away their *credibility.* The *Genealogies* of *Hesiod* are corrected by *Acusilaus*, *Acusilaus* is condemned by *Hellanicus*, *Hellanicus* accused of falshood by *Ephorus*, *Ephorus* by *Timæus*, *Timæus* by such who followed him, as *Josephus* fully shews. Where must we then fix our belief? upon all in common? that is the ready way to believe *contradictions:* for they condemn one another of falshood. Must we believe *one*, and reject the *rest?* but what evidence doth that *one* give why he should be credited more than the *rest?* And which is a most irrefragable argument against the *Grecian history*, their *eldest Historians* are acknowledged to be the most *fabulous*; for our only recourse for deciding the controversies among the *younger Historians*, must be to the *elder:* And *Sect.* 6. *Appion. l.* 1.

here we are further to seek than ever; for the first ages are *confessed* to be *poetical*, and to have no certainty of *truth* in them. So that it is impossible to find out any undoubted certainty of ancient times among the *Greek Historians*; which will be yet more evident when we add this, That there are very few extant of those Historians, who did carry the greatest name for Antiquity.

Sect. 7. The highest Antiquity of the *Greek Historians* doth not much exceed the time of *Cyrus* and *Cambyses*, as *Vossius* hath fully demonstrated in his *learned Book*, *De Historicis Græcis*, and therefore I shall spare particular enquiries into their several ages. Only these *two* things will further clear the *insufficiency* of the *Greek history*, as to an account of ancient times: *first*, *That of many of these old Historians we have nothing left but their mere names, without any certainty of what they treated.* Such are *Sisyphus Cous*, *Corinnus*, *Eugeon Samius*, *Deiochus Proconnesius*, *Eudemus Parius*, *Democles Phigaleus*, *Amelesagoras Chalcedonius*, *Xenomedes Chius*, and several others whose names are recorded by several Writers, and listed by *Vossius* among the *Historians*, but no evidence what subject of history was handled by them. *Secondly*, *That of those whose not only memories are preserved, but some evidence of what they writ, we have nothing extant till the time of the* Persian *war.* For all that was writ before, is now consumed by time, and swallowed up in that vast and all-devouring *Gulf*; in which yet their *heads* still *appear* above the waters, to tell us what once they informed the World of. It cannot be denyed, but if many of those ancient Histories were yet remaining, we might probably have some greater light into some matters of fact in the elder times of *Greece*, which now we are wholly to seek for, unless we think to quench our *thirst* in the *muddy waters* of some fabulous *Poets.* For what is now become of the *antiquities* of *Ionia* and the *city Miletus* written by *Cadmus Milesius*, supposed to be the first Writer of History? where lie the *Genealogies* of *Acusilaus Argivus?* where is now extant the *History* of the *Gods* written by *Pherecydes Scyrius*, *Pythagoras* his *Master?* or the *Chronica* of *Archilochus* who flourished about the 20th. *Olympiad?* or those of *Theagenes Rheginus?* Where may we hope to meet with *Pherecydes Lerius* his *Attick antiquities*, or his *Catalogue* of *Cities and Nations?* or *Hecatæus* his

description

description of *Asia*, and some suppose of *Libya* and *Europe* too? or the *Originals* of *Nations* and *Founders* of Cities written by *Hellanicus*? How may we come by the *Persick*, *Greek* and *Ægyptian History* of *Charon Lampsacenus*; the *Lydian History* of *Xanthus Lydius*; the *Samian Antiquities* of *Simmias Rhodius*; the *Corinthian History* of *Eumelus Corinthius*; *Panyasis* his *Antiquities* of *Greece*; the *Scythian History* of *Anacharsis*; the *Phrygian* of *Diagoras*; the *Chaldaick* and *Persian* of *Democritus*; the *Sicilian* and *Italian* of *Hippys Rheginus*; the *Telchiniack History* of *Teleclides*? All these are now *buried* with many more in the *rubbish* of *time*, and we have nothing but the meer *skeletons* of them left, to tell us that once such persons were, and thought themselves concerned to give the world some account of their being in it. Whereby may be likewise seen the *remarkable providence of God*, concerning the *sacred History*, which though of far greater *antiquity* than any of these, hath survived them all, and is still preserved with as much purity and incorruption as a Book passing through so many hands was capable of. But of that in its due place.

But yet if the *Greek Historians* that are yet extant, were of more undoubted credit than those that are lost, we might easily bear with our losing some old stories, if we gained some authentick history by it accomplished in all its parts: but even this we are far from in the *Greek History*; for the *Historians* themselves do either *confess their own ignorance of ancient times*, or *do most palpably discover it*, which was the *third* and *last* consideration touching the *credibility* of the *Grecian History*. That most grave and accurate Historian *Thucydides*, than whom scarce ever any *Grecian* discovered more an impartial love to the truth in what he writ, doth not only confess, but largely prove the *impossibility* of an exact account to be given of the times *preceding* the *Peloponnesian War*, in the very entrance into his History: *For*, saith he, *the matter preceding that time, cannot now through the length of time be accurately discovered or found out by us.* All that he could find in the ancient state of *Greece* was a great deal of *Confusion*, *unquiet stations*, *frequent removals*, *continual piracies*, and *no setled form of Commonwealth*. What certain account can be then expected of those times, when a most *judicious* Writer, even of *Athens* its self, acknowledg- *Sect.* 8.

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eth ſuch a *Chaos* in their *ancient Hiſtory!* And *Plutarch*, a later Author indeed, but ſcarce behind any of them, if we believe *Taurus* in *A. Gellius*, for learning and prudence, dares not, we ſee, venture any further back than the time of *Theſeus*; for before that time, as he compares it, as *Geographers in their Maps, when they have gone as far as they can, fill up the empty ſpace with ſome unpaſſable mountains, or frozen ſeas, or devouring ſands; ſo thoſe who give an account of elder times, are fain to inſert* τερατώδη καὶ τραγικὰ, *ſome wonderfull and Tragical ſtories, which (as he ſaith) have neither any truth nor certainty in them.* Thus we ſee thoſe who were beſt able to judge of the *Greek Antiquities*, can find no ſure footing to ſtand on in them; and what *baſis* can we find for our *faith*, where they could find ſo *little* for their *knowledge?* And thoſe who have been more daring and venturous than theſe perſons mentioned, what a *Labyrinth* have they run themſelves into? how many *confuſions* and *contradictions* have they involved themſelves in? ſometimes writing the paſſages of other *Countries* for thoſe of *Greece*, and at other times ſo confounding times, perſons and places, that one might think they had only a deſign upon the underſtandings of their readers, to make them play at *Blind-mans-buff* in ſearching for the *Kings* of *Greece*.

Sect. 9. But as they are ſo *confuſed* in their own Hiſtory, ſo they are as *ignorant* and *fabulous* when they dare venture over their own *threſholds* and look abroad into other Countries; we certainly owe a great part of the lamentable *ignorance* of the true *original* of moſt *Nations* to the pitifull account the *Greek* Authours have given of them; which have had the fortune to be entertained in the world with ſo much eſteem and veneration, that it hath been thought *learning* enough to be acquainted with the account which they give of Nations. Which I doubt not hath been the great reaſon ſo many fabulous relations, not only of *nations* but *perſons* and ſeveral *animals* never exiſting in the world, have met with ſo much entertainment from the leſs inquiſitive world. The *Greek* Writers, it is evident, *took* up things upon *truſt* as much as any people in the world did, being a very weak and inconſiderable Nation at firſt, and afterwards the knowledge they had was generally borrowed from other Nations, which the

the wiſe men only ſuited to the temper of the *Greeks*, and ſo made it more *fabulous* than it was before. As it was certainly the great defect of the *natural philoſophy* of the *Greeks*, (as it hath been ever ſince in the world) that they were ſo ready to form *Theories* upon ſome *principles* or *hypotheſes*, which they only received by *Tradition* from others, without fetching their *knowledge* from the *experiments* of *nature*; and to theſe they *ſuited* all the *phænomena* of *nature*; and what was not *ſuitable* was rejected as *monſtrous* and *anomalous*: ſo it was in their *Hiſtory* wherein they had ſome *fabulous hypotheſes* they took for *granted* without enquiring into the *truth* and *certainty* of them, and to theſe they ſuit whatever light they gained in after-times of the *ſtate* of Foreign *Nations*, which hath made *Truth* and *Antiquity wreſtle* ſo much with the *corruptions* which eat into them through the *pride* and *ignorance* of the *Greeks*. Hence they have always ſuited the Hiſtory of other Nations with the account they give of their own; and where nothing could ſerve out of their own *Hiſtory* to give an account of the *original* of other Nations, they (who were never backward at fictions) have made a Founder of them ſuitable to their own language. The truth is, there is nothing in the world uſefull or beneficial to mankind, but they have made ſhift to find the Authour of it among themſelves. If we enquire after the *original* of *Agriculture*, we are told of *Ceres* and *Triptolemus*; if of *paſturage*, we are told of an *Arcadian Pan*; if of *wine*, we preſently hear of a *Liber Pater*: if of *Iron inſtruments*, then who but *Vulcan?* if of *Muſick*, none like to *Apollo*. If we preſs them then with the *Hiſtory* of other Nations, they are as well provided here: if we enquire an account of *Europe*, *Aſia* or *Libya*; for the *firſt* we are told a fine ſtory of *Cadmus* his *ſiſter*, for the *ſecond* of *Prometheus* his *mother* of that name, and for the *third* of a *daughter* of *Epaphus*. If we are yet ſo curious as to know the original of particular Countries; then *Italia* muſt find its name from a *Calf* of *Hercules*, becauſe ϑαλος in *Greek* will ſignifie ſome ſuch thing; *Sardinia* and *Africa* muſt be from *Sardos* and *Afer* two *ſons* of *Hercules*; but yet if theſe will not ſerve, *Hercules* ſhall not want for *children* to people the world; for we hear of *Scythes*, *Galatas*, *Lydus*, ſome other ſons of his, that gave names to *Scythia*, *Lydia*, *Galatia*;

Galatia; with the ſame *probability* that *Media* had its name from *Medea*, and *Spain* and *Luſitania* from *Pan* and *Luſus*, two companions of *Bacchus*. If *Perſia* want a Founder, they have one *Perſeus* an *Argive* ready for it; if *Syria*, *Babylonia* and *Arabia* want reaſons of their names, the prodigal *Greeks* will give *Apollo* three ſons, *Syrus*, *Babylon* and *Arabs*, rather than they ſhall be *heretical Acephaliſts*. This vanity of theirs was *univerſal*, not confined to any place or age, but as any Nation or People came into their knowledge, their *Gods* were not ſo *decrepit*, but they might *father* one *ſon* more upon them, rather than any Nation ſhould be *filia populi*, and want a *father*. Only the grave *Athenians* thought ſcorn to have any *father* aſſigned them; their only *ambition* was to be accounted *Aborigines & genuini terræ*, to be the eldeſt ſons of their *Teeming mother the earth*, and to have been born by the ſame *equivocal generation* that Mice and Frogs are from the impregnated ſlime of the earth. Are we not like to have a wonderfull account of ancient times from thoſe who could arrogate to themſelves ſo much knowledge from ſuch ſlender and thin accounts of the Originals of people which they gave, and would have the world to entertain with the greateſt veneration upon their naked words? Have we not indeed great reaſon to hearken to thoſe who did ſo frequently diſcover their affection to Fables, and manifeſt their ignorance when ever they venture upon the Hiſtory of other Nations?

Sect. 10. The truth is, *Herodotus* himſelf (whom *Tully* calls *the Father of Hiſtory*, which title he deſerves at leaſt in regard of *antiquity*, being the eldeſt of the extant *Greek Hiſtorians*) hath ſtood in need of his *Compurgators*, who yet have not been able to acquit him of *fabuloſneſs*, but have ſought to make good his credit by *recrimination*, or by making it appear that *Herodotus* did not fully believe the ſtories he tells, but took them upon truſt himſelf, and ſo delivers them to the world. Some impute it to the *ingenuity* of *Herodotus*, that he calls his books of Hiſtory by the name of the *Muſes*, on purpoſe to tell his Readers they muſt not look for meer *Hiſtory* in him, but a mixture of ſuch relations, which though not true, might yet pleaſe and entertain his Readers. Though others think they were not ſo inſcribed by himſelf,

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but the names were given to them by the *Greeks* from the *admiration* his History had among them. However this were, this we are certain, that *Herodotus* was not first suspected of falshood in these latter ages of the world, but even among the *Greeks* themselves there have been found some that would undertake to make good that charge against him. For so *Suidas* tells us of one *Harpocration Ælius*, who writ a book on purpose to discover the falshood of *Herodotus*, περὶ τῆς κατὰ φθόνον τοῦ Ἡροδότου ἱστορίας. *Plutarch* his Books are well known of the *spight or malignity of Herodotus*, but the occasion of that is sufficiently known likewise, because *Herodotus* had given no very favourable character of *Plutarch's Countrey*. *Strabo* likewise seems to accuse *Herodotus* much of *nugacity* and *mixing prodigious fables with his History*; but, I confess, observing the grounds on which *Plutarch* insists against *Herodotus*, I am very prone to think that the ground of the great *pique* in some of the *Greek Writers* against *Herodotus*, was, that he told too many tales out of *School*, and had discovered too much of the *Infancy* of *Greece*, and how much the *Grecians* borrowed of the *Ægyptian superstitions*: which *Plutarch* expressly speaks of, that *Herodotus* was too much led aside, ὑπ' Αἰγυπτίων ἀλαζονείαις καὶ μυθολογίαις τὰ συμβάντα καὶ ἀγνοήτα τῶν Ἑλλωτικῶν ἱερῶν ἀνατρέπων. Although therefore *Herodotus* may not be much to blame in the things which the *Grecians* most charge him with, yet those who favour him most cannot excuse his palpable mistakes in some things, and *ignorance* in others. *Josephus* thinks he was deceived by the *Ægyptian Priests* in things relating to the state of their affairs, of which *Jos. Scaliger* gives many accounts; *either*, saith he, *the persons who gave him his intelligence were ignorant themselves*; *or else*, *like true Ægyptians*, *they were cunning enough*, *but imposed upon* Herodotus *being a stranger and unacquainted with their artifices*; *or else he did not understand his Interpreter*, *or was deceived by him*; or lastly, *Herodotus might have so much of a Grecian in him*, *as to adulterate the true History with some fables of his own*; wherefore he rather adheres to *Manetho* than *Herodotus* as to the *Ægyptian History*: who yet elsewhere (I will not say with what constancy to himself) vouchsafes him this high *elogium*, that he is, *Scrinium originum Græcarum & Barbararum*, *auctor à doctis nunquam deponendus*.

Geogr. l. 17.

De Herod. Mal. p. 857.

C. Appion. l. 1. *Canon. Isagog. l.* 3.

Not. ad num. Euseb. 1572.

Sect. 11. It cannot be denyed but a great deal of very uſefull Hiſtory may be fetched out of him; yet who can excuſe his *ignorance*, when he not only denies there is an *Ocean* compaſſing
Hiſt. l. 2. *c.* 4. the Land, but condemns the *Geographers* for aſſerting it? Unleſs this might be any plea for his *ignorance* in *Geography*, that he had ſo many great names after him guilty of the ſame: Witneſs *Ariſtotle*'s *ſuſpicion* that the *Indies* ſhould be joyned to *Europe* about the *Straights*, where they feigned *Hercules* his *pillars* to be. And the *Thereans ignorance* where any ſuch place as *Libya* was, when the *Oracle* bid them plant a *Colony* there. Would it not have been worth ones while to have heard the *great noiſe* the *Sun* uſed to make every night when he *douſed his head* in the *Ocean*, as none of the moſt ignorant *Greeks* imagined? And to have ſeen the *Sun* about *Hercules* his *pillars* to be a *hundred* times bigger than he appeared to them, as they commonly fanſied. Was not *Alexander*, think we, well *tutoured* in his *Coſmography* by his *Maſter Ariſtotle*,
Hiſt. Alexand. l. 6. when he writ word to his Mother, he had found out the *head* of *Nilus* in the *Eaſt Indies?* as *Arrian* relates the ſtory. No wonder then his *ſouldiers* ſhould miſtake the *mountain Paropamiſus* in the *Indies*, for *Caucaſus* near *Colchis*, when even their learned men thought *Colchis* the utmoſt boundary of the World on that ſide, as *Hercules* his *pillars* on this. What a lamentable account then were they able to give of the moſt ancient times, who were ſo ignorant of the *ſtate* of the *world* in their own time, when *Learning* was in its *height* in *Greece*, and frequent diſcoveries daily made of the world, by the wars which were made abroad! *Eratoſthenes* confeſſeth the *Grecians* were ignorant of a great part of *Aſia*, and the *Northern parts* of *Europe* before *Alexander*'s expedition; and *Strabo* confeſſeth as much of the *Weſtern* parts of *Europe* till the *Ro-*
Geogr. l. 1. *man expeditions* thither. *Palus Mæotis* and *Colchis*, ſaith he, were not fully known till the time of *Mithridates*, nor *Hyrcania*, *Bactriana*, and *Scythia*, till the *Parthian wars*. *Eratoſthenes* mentions ſome who thought the *Arabian Sea* to be only a *Lake*; and it further argues their ignorance in *Geography*, that the later *Geographers* always correct the errors of the elder, as *Ptolomy* doth *Marinus*, *Eratoſthenes* thoſe before him, *Hipparcus Eratoſthenes*, and *Strabo* not only both them, but *Eudoxus*, *Ephorus*, *Dicæarchus*, *Polybius*, *Poſidonius*, and almoſt all

all that had writ before him. I insist on these things, not that I would destroy the *credibility* of any *humane history*, where the Authours are guilty of any mistakes (for that were to take away the credit of all humane History) but to shew how *insufficient* those Histories are to give us a certain account of the *original* of *Nations*, who were so unacquainted with the *state* of those *Nations* which they pretended to give an account of. For where there is wanting *divine revelation* (which was not pretended by any *Greek Historians*; and if it had, had been easily refuted) there must be supposed a full and exact knowledge of all things pertaining to that which they pretend to give an account of; and if they discover *apparent defect* and *insufficiency* (which hath been largely manifested as to them, in the precedent discourse) we have ground to deny the *credibility* of those *Histories* upon the account of such defect and insufficiency. So much then will abundantly suffice for the making good the first argument against the *credibility* of *profane histories*, as to the account which they give of ancient times, different from the *Word of God.*

CHAP. V.

The general uncertainty of Heathen Chronology.

The want of credibility in Heathen Hiſtory further proved from the uncertainty and confuſion in their accounts of ancient times; that diſcovered by the uncertain form of their years. An enquiry into the different forms of the Ægyptian years; the firſt of thirty Days, the ſecond of four Months; of both inſtances given in the Ægyptian hiſtory. Of the Chaldean accounts, and the firſt Dynaſties mentioned by Beroſus, *how they may be reduced to probability. Of the Ægyptian Dynaſties. Of* Manetho. *Reaſons of accounting them fabulous, becauſe not atteſted by any credible authority, and rejected by the beſt Hiſtorians. The opinion of* Scaliger *and* Voſſius, *concerning their being cotemporary, propounded and rejected with reaſons againſt it. Of the ancient diviſion of Ægypt into* Nomi *or Provinces, and the number of them againſt* Voſſius *and* Kircher.

Sect. 1. THE next thing to manifeſt how little there is of *credibility* in the *account* of *ancient times*, reported by the *hiſtories* of *heathen Nations*, is, the *uncertainty, confuſion and ambiguity in the account which they give of thoſe times.* If we ſuppoſe them not at all *defective* as to their *records*, if yet we find the *account* given ſo *perplexed, ambiguous* and *confuſed*, that we can find no *certainty* at all of the meaning of it, we have very little reaſon to entertain it with any certain aſſent unto it. Now this will be made evident by theſe things. 1. *The uncertainty of their Chronology, whereon their whole account depends.* 2. *The multitude of Impoſtures taken for ancient Hiſtories.* 3. *The uncertain meaning of theſe Characters wherein their ancient Hiſtories were preſerved.* I begin with *the great uncertainty of the heathen Chronology*, which will be manifeſted by two things; firſt, *the uncertain form of their years:* ſecondly, *the want or uncertainty of their* Δεκάγμαλα, *or certain fixed Epocha's from which to derive their account of ancient times.* Firſt, the *uncertain form of their years*; this of it ſelf is ſufficient to deſtroy the *credibility* of their accounts of antiquity, if it be manifeſted that they had different *forms* of *years* in uſe among them; and it be uncertain to which to refer their accounts they

they give; for if *years* be sometimes *Lunar*, sometimes *Solar*, and sometimes but of *thirty days*, sometimes of *four Months*, sometimes of *three hundred and sixty days*, sometimes *three hundred sixty five*, sometimes *four times three hundred sixty five* in their *tetraeteris*, sometimes *eight times* in their *octaeteris*, sometimes more, what certainty can we possibly have which of them to fix their accounts to? Especially when they only give them in general, and never tell us which of them they mean, which may make it shrewdly suspicious that their intent is only to impose on our understandings, and not to deal fairly and truly with us. We shall therefore so much explain the different *form* of their years, as thereby to shew what uncertainties we are left to by them: Where we meddle not with their *Tropical* and *Astronomical* years, but chiefly those which were in *civil use* among the several Nations we speak to. A *year* is nothing else but a *System of days*, and is therefore capable of as great *varity*, as *days* are in being joyned together; but usually there were some other lesser *Systems* of *days* than those which are called *years*, out of which the other doth *result*. Such is the ἑπτημέρον, or *the week*, which, as *Joseph Scaliger* saith, was *res omnibus Orientis populis ab ultima usque antiquitate usitata*; *a thing in continual use among the Eastern Nations*, though it be but of late reception into the parts of *Europe*, and no elder than *Christianity* among them. Among the *Romans* was used an ὀκτημέρον, which was for the sake of the *Nundinæ* returning every *ninth day*. The *Mexicans* as *Scaliger* tells us, reckon all by a τεσσαιδεκαήμερον, *a System of thirteen days*. Next to these were their *Months*, which were either *Lunar* or *Solar*. The *Lunar* were either from the *Moon's return* to the same *point* of the *Zodiack* again, called περίοδος σελήνης, which was less than *twenty eight* days; but this was of no use in civil *computations*; or else from *one conjunction* of the *Moon* with the *Sun* to *another*, which was called σύνοδος σελήνης; or else from the first *phasis* of the *Moon*, the second day after its *coitus*, called φάσις and ἀπόκρυσις σελήνης; some, as the *Grecians*, reckoned their *Lunar months* from the *coitus*, as *Scaliger* proves out of *Vitruvius*; others from the *phasis*, as some *Eastern Nations* did; as the *Jews* began their observation of the *New Moons* from the first *phasis* or appearance of her after the *coitus*. The *Solar months* were either *natural*, such

De Emendat. Temp. l. 1.

ſuch as were defined by the Sun's paſſage from one ſign of the *Zodiack* to another; or *civil*, whereby the *months* were *equally divided* into 30 *days* apiece, as in the *Grecian* and *Ægyptian year*.

Sect. 2. Having thus far ſeen of what the year conſiſts, we now proceed to ſhew that the ancient Nations did not obſerve one conſtant certain form of year among them, but had ſeveral in *uſe*, to which their accounts may be referred. And becauſe the *Ægyptians* are ſuppoſed to have been beſt skilled as to the *form* of the *year*, according to that of *Macrobius*, *Anni certus modus apud ſolos ſemper Ægyptios fuit*: We ſhall particularly demonſtrate the variety of years in uſe among them: By which we ſhall ſee what great uncertainty there is in their accounts of their *Dynaſties*. For firſt it is evident that the time of 30 days was among the ancient *Ægyptians* accounted a *year*, for which we have the *teſtimony* of *Plutarch* in *Numa*. Αἰγυπτίοις ἦν μηνιαῖος ὧν ὁ ἐνιαυτὸς ἔτι τετράμηνος; *The Ægyptians at firſt had a year conſiſting of one month, and after of four*: And this, if we believe *Alexander ab Alexandro*, was the *year* moſt frequently in uſe among them. So *Varro* in *Lactantius* gives an account of the great Age of ſome men in ancient times, who are ſuppoſed to have lived a 1000 years; *Ait enim apud Ægyptios pro annis menſes haberi, ut non Solis per* 12 *ſigna circuitus faciat annum, ſed Luna quæ orbem illum ſigniferum* 30 *dierum ſpacio illuſtrat.* It is then evident that this year of thirty days was in uſe among the *Ægyptians*; the only ſcruple is whether it was uſed in their *ſacred accounts* or no; and that it was, we have a pregnant teſtimony in *Plutarch*, in the forecited place; ſpeaking of the *Ægyptians* great pretence to antiquity, he gives this account of it; πλῆθος ἀμύθητον ἐτῶν ὅτι ταῖς γενεαλογίαις καταφέρουσιν, ἅ τε δὴ τοὺς μῆνας εἰς ἐτῶν ἀριθμὸν τιθέμενοι. *They reckon an infinite number of years in their accounts, becauſe they reckon their months inſtead of years.*

Saturn. l. 1. *c.* 12.

Gen. Dict. l. 2. *c.* 23.

De Origin. error. l. 2. *c.* 12.

According to this computation, it will be no difficult matter to reduce the vaſt accounts of the *Ægyptian antiquity* to ſome proportion, and to reconcile their exorbitant *Dynaſties* with *ſobriety* and *truth*, eſpecially as to the account given of them by *Diodorus Siculus*; for ſo *Diodorus* gives in their accounts, that the *Gods* and *Hero's* raigned in *Ægypt* for the ſpace of near 18000 *years*, and the laſt of them was *Orus* the Son of *Iſis*:

Biblioth l. 1.

From

From the reign of men in *Ægypt* he reckons about 9500 *years* to the time (if we admit of *Jacob. Capellus* his correction of τετρακοσίων for τετρακισχιλίων in *Diodorus*) with his entrance into *Ægppt*, which was in the 180 *Olympiad*. Now as the aforesaid *learned Authour* observes, *Diodorus* came into *Ægypt*, *A. M.* 3940. *V. C.* 694. the *mortal men* then had reigned in *Ægypt* 9500 *years*, which taking it for these *Lunar years* of 30 *days*, makes of *Julian years* 780. the *Hero's* and *Gods* 18000 *months*, that is of *Julian years* 1478? from these two summs together are gathered 2258 *years*, which being deducted from the year of the world 3940, falls in the year of the world 1682 about which time *Misraim*, who was the great historical *Osiris* of *Ægypt* (so called by a light variation of his formes name) might be well supposed to be born; for that was in the year of *Noah* 630; and so *Orus* might be *born*, who was the Son of *Osiris*, about the year of the world 1778. Between whose time and *Alexander* the great his Conquest of *Ægypt*, the *Ægyptians*, as the same *Diodorus* tells us, reckon little less than 23000 *years*: Now according to this *computation* of 30 *days* for *a year*, we may reconcile this to truth too; for from 1778 to 3667 of the *world*, which falls upon the 417 *year* of *Nabonassar*, there is an *interval* of 1889 *years*, which makes of these *Lunar years* of 30 *days*, saith *Capellus*, 22996 and 15 *days*, which comes very near, if not altogether, up to the *Ægyptian Computation*: So when the *Ægyptians*, according to *Diodorus*, make no less than 10000 *years* distance between their *Hercules* and *Hercules Bæotius*, the Son of *Alcmena*, it must be understood of these *Lunar years*; for granting what the *Ægyptians* say, that *Hercules Bæotius* lived but one generation before the *Trojan war*, and so his time to fall out about 2783, reckoning now backward from thence, and deducting from that year of the world 10000 *months* of 30 *days*, or *Julian years* 831, and 130 *days*, the time of the *Ægyptian Hercules* will fall about the first year of the world, 1962. about which time we may well suppose him to live or die. And according to this computation we are to understand what the *Ægyptians* told *Herodotus*, that from their first *King* or *Priest* of *Vulcan*, till the time of *Sethoes* (in whose time *Sennacherib* attempted the Conquest of *Ægypt*) that there had been passed 341. *Generations*, and as many *Kings* and *High-Priests*, and 11340 *years*, reckoning

Hist. Sacr. & Exot. A. M. 1682.

reckoning three *Generations* to make up a *Century*. But now, if we understand this prodigious computation according to this form of years, we may suspect the *Ægyptians* of an intention to deceive *Herodotus* and the credulous *Greeks*, but yet not impeach them of direct falshood, it being thus reconcilable to truth. For according to this account 100 years makes 3000 days, and a Generation 1000; so many days the *Kings* or *Priests* of *Vulcan* may be allowed to reign; so 340 *Generations* of 1000 *days* apiece, make up 340000 *days*, to which, if we add the 200 *days* which *Sethos* had now reigned upon *Sennacherib's* invasion, we have 340200 *days*, which makes up of these years of 30 days apiece 11340, which is the number assigned by *Herodotus*: *Jacchus Capellus* thinks the *Epocha* from whence these years are to reckoned, is from *A. M.* 2350, when *Mephres* began to reign in *Ægypt*, from whence if we number these 340200 days, or 11340 monthly years, which makes up of *Julian years* 931, and 152 *days*, the number falls *A. M.* 3282; about which time in probability *Sennacherib* invaded *Ægypt*. Thus we see by making use of those *Lunar years*, that it is possible to reconcile some of the *Ægyptian* extravagant accounts to some probability and consistency with truth; but however we owe very little thanks to the *Ægyptians* for it, who deliver these things in gross, without telling us which years they mean, and thereby evidence their intent to deceive all who have so little wit as to be deceived by them.

Hist. sacr. & Exotic. p. 198.

Sect. 3. The next *kind* and *form* of the *Ægyptian year*, was that which consisted of four *equal months*, amounting to 120 *days*; the use of this kind of year among them is attested by *Plutarch* in the fore-cited place, and by *Diodorus*, who gives an account of this kind of year among the *Ægyptians*. *Solinus* seems to mention this as the only *year* in request among the *Ægyptians*: and so *S. Austin*. *Perhibentur Ægyptii quondam tam breves annos habuisse ut quaternis mensibus finirentur*. This renders then the *Ægyptians* accounts yet more *uncertain*, and only leaves us to guess with the greatest probability of reason, what form of year was meant by them in their *Computations*. So when *Diodorus* speaks so much in favour of the old *Ægyptian Kings* and *Laws*, and produceth this from the *Ægyptian Priests*, as the best evidence of the excellent temper of their Govern-

L. 1.

Polyhist. c. 3.

De Civit. Dei, l. 12. *c.* 10.

L. 1. *Biblioth.*

Government, that they had *Kings* of their own Nation for the space of 4700 *years*, till the time of *Cambyses* his inroad into *Ægypt*, which was in the third year of the 63 *Olympiad*. Now besides the apparent *contradiction* of these accounts to the *other* already explained, if we take them in gross, as the *Ægyptians* give them, it is evident this can be no otherwise true, than by taking these accounts in that form of years now mentioned by us. For these 4700 years, taking them for 120 *days apiece*, make up of *Julian years* 1544, which being deducted from the year of the world 3475, which was the time when *Cambyses* invaded *Ægypt*, the remainder is *A. M.* 1931, about which time we may fix the death of *Orus*, from whom their proper *Kings* commenced. And of these years *Vossius* tells us we are to understand what they report of the long lives of their *ancient Kings*, when they attribute to each of them the space of 300 *years*, as when they attribute a 1000, and more to their *eldest Kings*, we are to understand them of simple *Lunar years* of 30 days, by which these *Gigantick* measures of the term of their lives, may without the help of *Procrustes* be cut short according to the *proportion* of mens ordinary age in those eldest times. So when *Diodorus* reckons from the death of *Proteus* to his own time *A. M.* 3940, 3400 years, it must be understood of these years of *four equal months*; for so those 2400 years make up of *Julian years* 1117, which being deduced from 3940, the remainder is 2823, about which year of the world *Proteus* may be supposed to live, which was about the time of the *Judges* in *Israel*.

De Idolat. l. 1. c. 28.

Neither was this only the *Ægyptians* way, but in probability the ancient *Chaldeans* observed the same, which may be a ground likewise of those unmeasurable accounts among them in their first *Dynasties*, as is evident in the Fragments of *Abydenus* and *Apollodorus* out of *Berosus*, where the times of their first *Kings* are reckoned not by years, but Σάροι, Νέροι, and Σῶσοι; now according to them every Σάρος contained 3600 years, Νῆρος 600, Σῶσος 60. Now who can imagine that *Alorus* and the ten *Kings* from him to *Xisuthrus* should reign 120 *Sari* as their computation is, which reckoning for every *Saros* 3600 years, makes up 432000 years? A very fair *sum* for the *Chaldean Dynasties* before the time of *Xisuthrus* by whom in probability *Noah* was by them understood. There have been

Sect. 4.

only two ways thought on of dealing with theſe computations; either rejecting them as wholly *fabulous*, and founded on no evidence or Records of Hiſtory, as we have ſeen already; only they might retain (being ſo near the place of the Settlement of *Noah* and his poſterity after the flood) the memory not only of the flood (of which it is evident they had ſeveral remainders preſerved in their traditions) but likewiſe of the Ages of men preceding the flood, wherein they were right, reckoning from *Alorus* the firſt to *Xiſuthrus*, i.e. from *Adam* to *Noah*, ten *Generations*; but as to the names of thoſe ten perſons, and the times they lived in, being wholly ignorant through the unfaithfulneſs of tradition, they took their liberty not only of coyning names, but of ſetting what Age to them they pleaſed themſelves. And to this purpoſe *Scaliger* obſerves that ſome of their firſt *Kings* are reckoned before the *flood*, which ſaith he, is denied by *Georgius Syncellus* without any ſhew of reaſon. Thus far then we may admit of the *Chaldeans Dynaſties* as to ſome part of the tradition, but rejecting their names and computations as fabulous. The other way of explaining theſe *Dynaſties*, is by the ſeveral ways of computation among them; For the learned *Monks*, *Panodorus*, and *Anianus*, underſtand thoſe vaſt ſumms, not of *years*, but *days*, and ſo make a *Saros* to contain 120 months of 30 days apiece, which ſaith *Scaliger*, make ten *Chaldee years*, and *a Nirus* 20 *equal months*, and *a Soſos two:* according to which computation the 100 *Sari* make but 1200 *years*. But this computation of theirs is rejected by *Georgius Syncellus*, becauſe he ſuppoſeth *Euſebius* ſo well verſed in theſe things, that he would never have ſet them down for *years*, if the *Chaldeans* had not underſtood them ſo, and therefore he would not trouble himſelf in reducing *Fables* to true *Hiſtory*, as he expreſſeth it, whoſe words are at large produced by *Scaliger* in the forecited place; and it will appear more neceſſary to reject thoſe *Chaldean Computations*, if we take the *ſumms* of their years in the ſence which *Salmaſius* gives of them in the Preface to his Book, *De annis Climactericis* (from whom *Dyrerius* the Authour of the *Præadamites* hath borrowed moſt of his Arguments as to theſe things.) According to him then, every Σάρος contained no leſs than 6000 years, as the *Toman* among the *Perſians* contained 10000, but becauſe that

Not in Gr. Euſeb. p. 406.

learned

learned man hath only given us his *reperi Scriptum*, without any certain Foundation for so large an account of those *summs*, we shall take them in as favourable a Sence as we can. In order to which a very *learned man* of our own hath found a third interpretation of the Σάρος, in the *Chaldee accounts*, from a *correction* of *Suidas* by the *M.S.* in the *Vatican Library*, according to which he thus reads the words, Οἱ γὰρ ἐκ σάρων ποιοῦσιν ἑαυτοὺς βσκβ' ἀπὸ τῶν Χαλδαίων Ὑῆφον, εἴπερ ὁ σάρος ποιεῖ μῆνας Σελληναικοὺς σκβ', δῆλοι γίνονται τὰ ἐναυτοὶ ἐν μῆνες ἐξ, *and so the Sence*, saith he, *is clear*, Σάρος *according to the Chaldee account comprehends* 222 *months, which come to eighteen years and six months; therefore* 120 σάροι *make* 2220 *years, and therefore* (he adds) *for* βσκβ'. *I read, leaving out the last* β, βσκ'. Now according to this Sence of 120 *Sari* to comprehend the *summ* of 2220 *years*, it will be no difficult matter to reduce the *fragment of Berosus* concerning the ten *Kings* before the flood reigning 120 *Sari*, to some degree of probability: As to which I shall only suppose these two things. *First*, that the ancient *Chaldeans* had preserved among them some *tradition* of the *number* of the chief *persons* before the *flood*; for we find them exactly agreeing with the *Scriptures* as to the *number*, though differing as to the *names* of them, which may be seen in the Fragments of *Africanus* preserved in *Eusebius* his *Greek Chronica*. *Secondly*, that *Berosus* from whom *Apollodorus* and *Alexander Polyhistor* deliver these *computations*, might, as to the *account* of the *times* of those *persons*, follow the *translation* of the *Septuagint*. For I have already made it evident that *Berosus* did not publish his *History* till after the *Septuagint* was abroad; now according to the *computation* of the *Septuagint* of the *ages* before flood, these 120 *Sari* of the ten *Kings* will not much disagree from it. For these make 2220 *years* of these ten *persons*, and the *Septuagint* in all make 2242; so that if in stead of βσκβ' in *Suidas*, we only read it βσμβ' we have the exact computation of the *Septuagint* in these 120 *Sari*; but of this let the learned judge.

D. Pearson on the Creed. *p.* 115. 1. *edit.*

Pag. 5.

We now come to the *Ægyptian Dynasties* of *Manetho*, as to which I doubt we must be fain to take the same course that *Eusebius* did with the *Chaldean*, μὴ συμβιβάζειν τὸ ψεῦδος τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, *not to trouble our selves overmuch in seeking to reconcile Fables to truth*. Great pains is taken by some very

Sect. 5.

learned men to reduce the disorderly *Dynasties* of *Manetho*, to some probable account; but I must confess upon an impartial Examination of them, that I think they have striven, if not to make an *Æthiopian white*, yet an *Ægyptian* to *speak truth concerning his own Country*, which are almost of an equal impossibility. *Joseph Scaliger* who first in this latter age of the world produced them into the light out of *Georgius Syncellus*, hath a more favourable opinion of them, than of the *Ægyptian History* of *Herodotus*, *Diodorus* and others, but upon what account I cannot imagine. Is it because four *Dynasties*, according to his own computation, exceed the Creation of the world according to the true account? for which he is fain to make use of his *Tempus prolepticum* and *Julian period*; which reacheth 764 years beyond the age of the world, and was invented by him from the multiplication of the great *Cycle* into the *indiction*, i. e. of 532 into 15. Or is it because forsooth *Manetho* hath digested all into better order, and reckoned up the several *Dynasties* which lay confused in other Authors? but this only shews him a more *cunning impostor* who saw the former accounts given by others would not serve the turn, and therefore pretends to more exactness and diligence, that he might more easily deceive his Readers. But setting aside those things which have been said already concerning *Manetho*, I have these things which make me reject his *Dynasties* as *fabulous*: *First*, the vast difference between *Manetho* his accounts and all others who have written the *Ægyptian History* in the order, and names of his *Dynasties*. Where do we ever read of the several *Dynasties* of the *Thinites*, *Memphites*, *Soites*, *Diospolitans* and many others, but in himself? It is very strange that neither *Herodotus*, nor *Eratosthenes*, nor *Diodorus*, who have all written a succession of the *Ægyptian Kings*, should neither by their own *industry*, nor by all the *interest* they had in *Ægypt*, get any knowledge of these methodically digested *Dynasties*. Besides, had their been any historical certainty in these *Dynasties* of *Manetho*, whence comes it to pass that they should be so silently passed over by those who were *Ægyptian Priests* themselves, and undertook to write the History of *Ægypt*?

Such

Such were *Chæremon* who was an ἱερογραμματεὺς a *sacred Scribe*, and *Ptolomæus Mendesius* who was an *Ægyptian Priest*, as *Eusebius* tells us, and comprehended the History of *Ægypt* in three books. Now had this *History* been so *authentical* as is pretended, whence come so many and great *contradictions* between them, insomuch that *Josephus* saith, *If that which they report were true, it were impossible they should so much differ; but they labour in the invention of lyes, and write neither agreeably to the truth nor to one another.* So that it is next to a miracle almost to see how prodigiously fond of these *Dynasties Kircher* is, and what pains he hath taken to no purpose about them; *scio multos esse*, saith he, *qui hujusmodi Dynastias meras nugas & commenta putant*; very true; but why is not he of the same mind too? he confesseth himself to have been so once; but since he hath conversed more with the *Oriental traditions*, he hath found them not to be so fabulous as many make them. It seems then the *Basis* of the *Ægyptian Dynasties* as well before the *flood* as after, must lie in this *Oriental tradition*; a thing, which some, to shew their great skill in those Eastern Languages, are grown very fond of. But as far as I can yet see, they *sail* to *Ophir*, nor for *Gold*, but *Peacocks*; and the next *Legend* the world hath should be called *Legenda Orientalis*. For can any thing be more irrational, absurd and fabulous, than those *Arabick traditions* which that Authour scrapes as much for, as *Æsop's Cock* did on the *dunghil?* but there is no *jewel* to be found among them; Unless we should take those fifteen hard names of men for such which by the *Arabick writers* are said to have succeeded each other in *Ægypt* before the *flood*, viz. *Nacraus*, *Nathras*, *Mesram*, *Henoah*, *Arjak*, *Hasilim*, *Husal*, *Tatrasan*, *Sarkak*, *Schaluk*, *Surith*, (who they say built the *Pyramids*) *Hugith*, *Manaus*, *Aphrus*, *Malinus*, *Abn Ama Pharaun*, in whose time they say the flood came. But should we be so little befriended by reason as to grant all this, what advantage will this be to *Manetho*, who speaks not of *Kings*, but whole *Dynasties?* so that it still appears these *Dynasties* are fabulous, not being attested by any credible witnesses. *Secondly*, All those who profess to follow *Manetho*, differ strangely from one another, as *Josephus*, *Africanus*, *Eusebius*, *George the Syncellus* of the *Patriarch Tarasius*; and *Scaliger*, who hath taken so much pains in digesting of them, yet

C. *App. l.* 1.

Oed. Ægy To 1. *Sym.* 1. *c.* 9.

yet he is condemned by others ſince; and *Iſaac Voſſius* gives a particular caution to his Reader, *In his Dynaſtiis compingendis nequaquam eſſe ſequendum ordinem & calculum Scaligeri.* What ſhould be the reaſon of this diverſity, but that they thought them not ſo *authentick*, but they might cut off, alter and tranſpoſe, as they ſaw occaſion? which is moſt plain and evident in *Euſebius*, who makes no difficulty of cutting off one whole *Dynaſty*, and dividing another into two, only to reconcile the diſtance between *Thuoris*, the *Ægyptian King*, and *Teutamus*, the *Aſſyrian Emperour*, and the *deſtruction* of *Troy*; and therefore leaves out four *Aſſyrian Kings*, and a *whole Dynaſty* of the *Ægyptians*, to make a *Synchroniſm* between thoſe three.

De ætat. Mundi, cap. 10.

Sect. 6. But yet there hath been ſomething very fairly offered to the world, to clear the *truth*, if not *Manetho*, in order to his *Dynaſties*, viz. that the ſubtle *Ægyptian*, to *inhance* the *antiquity* of his own *Countrey*, did take *implicite* years for *ſolid*, and place thoſe in a *ſucceſſion* which were *cotemporary* one with another; This indeed is a very compendious way to advance a great ſumm of years with a very little charge: Wherein he hath done, ſaith *Capellus*, as if a *Spaniard* in the *Indies* ſhould glory of the *antiquity* of the *Dynaſties* of *Spain*, and ſhould attribute to the *Earls of Barcinona* 337 years, to the *King of Arragon* 498, to the *King* of *Portugal* 418, to the *King* of *Leo* 545, of *Caſtile* 800 years, and yet all theſe *Dynaſties* riſe from the *year* of our Lord 717, when the *Saracens* firſt entred *Spain*. There are very few Nations, but will go near to vie antiquity with the *Ægyptians*, if they may thus be allowed to reckon ſucceſſively all thoſe *petty royalties* which anciently were in moſt Nations; as might be particularly inſtanced in moſt *great Empires*, that they *gradually* riſe from the *ſubduing* and *incorporating* of thoſe *petty royalties* into which the ſeveral Nations were *cantonized* before. And there ſeems to be very ſtrong ground of ſuſpicion that ſome ſuch thing was deſigned by *Manetho*, from the 32d. *Dynaſty* which is of the *Dioſpolitan Thebans*; for this *Dynaſty* is ſaid to begin from the tenth *year* of the 15th. *Dynaſty* of the *Phœnician Paſtours* in the time of *Saites*; now, which is moſt obſervable, he that begins this *Dynaſty*, is of the very ſame name with him who begins the very firſt *Dynaſty* of *Manetho*, who is *Menes*,

Hiſt. ſacr. & exot. A. M. 3308.

Menes, and so likewise his son *Athothis* is the same in both: Which hath made many think, because *Menes* is reckoned first, not only in both these, but in *Diodorus*, *Eratosthenes* and others, that this *Menes* was he who first began the *Kingdom* of *Ægypt*, after whose time it was divided into several *Dynasties*. Which makes *Scaliger* say, *illa vetustissima regna fuerunt instar latrociniorum, ubi vis non lex aut successio aut suffragia populi reges in solio regio collocabant.* This opinion of the *co-existence* of these *Dynasties* is much embraced by *Vossius* both *Father* and *Son*, and by the *Father* made *use* of to justifie *Scaliger* from *calumniators*, who made as though *Scaliger* did in effect overthrow the *authority* of the Scriptures by mentioning with some applause the *Dynasties* of *Manetho*.

Canon. Isag. l. 3.

Gerard. Vos. Idol. l. 1. c. 28. Is. Vos. de æt. Mundi, c. 10.

But to this opinion, how plausible soever it seems, I offer these exceptions. *First*, As to that *Menes* who is supposed to be the first Founder of the *Ægyptian Kingdom*, after whose death it is supposed that *Ægypt* was divided into all these *Dynasties*; I demand therefore who this *Menes* was; was he the same with him whom the Scripture calls *Misraim*, who was the first Planter of *Ægypt*? this is not probable, for in all probability his name must be sought among the *Gods*, and not the *mortals* that reigned. If we suppose him to be any other after him, it will be hard giving an account how he came to have the whole power of *Ægypt* in his hands, and so soon after him it should be divided. For *Kingdoms* are oft-times made up of those *petty royalties* before; but it will be very hard finding instances of one person's enjoying the whole power, and so many *Dynasties* to arise after his decease, and to continue *co-existent* in peace and full power so long as these several *Dynasties* are supposed to doe. Besides, Is it not very strange that no Historian should mention such a former distribution of several Principalities so anciently in *Ægypt*? But that which to me utterly overthrows the *co-existence* of these *Dynasties* in *Ægypt*, is, by comparing with themwhat we find in Scripture of greatest antiquity concerning the *Kingdom* of *Ægypt*; which I cannot but wonder that none of these learned men should take notice of. When the *Ægyptian Kingdom* was first founded, is not here a place to enquire; but it is evident that, in *Abraham*'s time, there was a *Pharaoh*, *King of Ægypt* (whom Archbishop *Usher* thinks to have been *Apophis*) not

Sect. 7.

Abimelech

Gen. 12. *Abimelech* the first *King* of *Ægypt*, as *Constantinus Manasses* reports in his *Annals* (by a ridiculous mistake of the *King* of *Gerar* for the *King* of *Ægypt.*) This *Pharaoh* was then certainly *King* of all the *Land* of *Ægypt*, which still in Scripture is called the *Land of Misraim* from the first Planter of it: and this was of very great antiquity; and therefore *Funccius* (though improbably) thinks this *Pharaoh* to have been *Osiris*, and *Rivet* thinks *Misraim* might have been alive till that time; here then we find no *Dynasties co-existing*, but one *Kingdom* under one *King*. If we descend somewhat lower, to the times of *Jacob* and *Joseph*, the evidence is so undoubted of *Ægypt*'s being an entire *Kingdom* under one *King*, that he may have just cause to suspect the eyes either of his body or his mind that distrusts it. For what more evident, than that *Pharaoh* who preferred *Joseph*, was *King of all the Land of* Ægypt? *Were not the seven years of famine over all the Land of* Ægypt? *Gen.* 41. 55. *Was not* Joseph *set by* Pharaoh *over all the Land of* Ægypt? *Gen.* 41. 41, 43, 45. *And did not* Joseph *go over all the Land of* Ægypt *to gather corn?* Gen. 41. 46. *Nay, did he not buy all the Land of* Ægypt *for* Pharaoh? *Gen.* 47. 20. Can there possibly be given any fuller *evidences* of an entire *Kingdom*, than these are, that *Ægypt* was such then? Afterwards we read of one *King* after *another* in *Ægypt* for the space of nigh *two hundred* years, during the *children* of *Israel*'s *slavery* in *Ægypt*; and was not he, think we, *King* over all *Ægypt*, in whose time the *children* of *Israel* went out thence? And in all the following History of Scripture, is there not mention made of *Ægypt* still as an entire *Kingdom*, and of one *King* over it? Where then is there any place for these *co-temporary Dynasties* in *Ægypt?* No where that I know of, but in the *fancies* of some *learned men.*

Sect. 8. Indeed there is one place that seems to give some countenance to this opinion; but it is in far later times than the first *Dynasties* of *Manetho* are supposed to be in, which is in *Isai.* 19. 2. *Where God saith, he would set the Ægyptians against the Ægyptians, and they shall fight every one against his brother, City against City, and Kingdom against Kingdom.* Where it seems that there were several Kingdoms then existent among the *Ægyptians*; but the *Septuagint* very well renders it νομὸς ἐπὶ νομόν. now νομός among the *Ægyptians*, as *Epiphanius* and *others* tell us,

us, notes τῶν ἐκάστης πόλεως ἐπιοικίδια ἤτοι περίχωρον, *the precincts of every great City, such as our Counties are*, and therefore *Pliny* renders νομοὶ by *præfecturæ*; these were the *several Provinces* of *Ægypt*, of which there were *thirty six* in *Ægypt*, *ten* in *Thebais*, *ten* in *Delta*, the other *sixteen* in the *midland parts*; so that by *Kingdom* against *Kingdom*, no more is meant than one *Province* being set against *another*. *Isaac Vossius* thinks the number of the ancient *Nomi* was *twelve*, and that over every one of these was a peculiar *King*; and that this number may be gathered from the *Dynasties* of *Manetho*, setting aside the *Dynasties* of the *Persians*, *Æthiopians*, and *Phœnicians*: *viz.* the *Thinites*, *Memphites*, *Elephantines*, *Heracleopolitans*, *Diospolitan Thebans*, the *lesser Diospolitans*, *Xoites*, *Tanites*, *Bubastites*, *Saites*, *Mendesians*, and *Sebennytes*: and so that *Ægypt* was anciently a *Dodecharchy*, as *England* in the *Saxons* times was a *Heptarchy*. But as it already appears, there could be anciently no such *Dodecharchy* in *Ægypt*; so it is likewise evident that this *distribution* of *Ægypt* into *Nomi* is a *later* thing, and by most Writers is attributed to *Sesoosis* or *Sesostris*, whom *Josephus* supposeth to be *Sesack King* of *Ægypt*, co-temporary with *Rehobam*. Indeed if we believe *Gelaldinus* the *Arabick Historian* cited by *Kircher*, the most ancient *distribution* of *Ægypt* was into *four parts*. *Misraim* held one part to himself, and gave his Son *Copt* another, *Esmun* a third, and *Atrib* a fourth part; which division the same Authour affirms to have continued till the time of *Joseph*, who made a new *distribution* of the whole *Land*: After him *Sesostris* divided the *whole* into *thirty* several *Nomi*; so *Kircher* will needs have it, that of the three several parts of *Ægypt*, each might have for some *mystical signification* its *ten Nomi*, of which every one had its *distinct* and peculiar *God* it worshipped, and a particular *Palace* in the *Labyrinth*, and a peculiar *Sanhedrin* or *Court* of *Justice* belonging to it. But it evidently appears by that vain-glorious *Oedipus*, that it is a far easier *matter* to make *new mysteries*, than to interpret *old ones*, which as it might be easily discovered in the main *foundations* whereon that *structure stands*, so we have some *evidence* of it in our first *entrance* into it, in this part of *Chorography* of *Ægypt*. For from whence had he this exact *division* of *Ægypt* into *thirty Nomi*, *ten* of which belonged to the upper *Ægypt*, or *Thebais*, *ten* to *Delta*,

Vid. Boch. Geogr. p. 1. l. 4. c. 4. Oedip. Ægypt. To. 1. Syntag. 1. c. 4.

or the lower *Ægypt*, and the *ten* remaining to the *midland* *Countrey?* Hath he this from *Ptolomy*, whose *Scheme* of the several *Nomi* he publisheth? No, *Ptolomy* and *Pliny* by his own *confession* afterwards add many other to these, as *Omphile*, *Phanturites*, *Tanites*, *Phatnites*, *Neut*, *Heptanomos*, &c. Hath he it from *Strabo*, whose *authority* he *cites* for it? No such matter. For *Strabo* saith expresly that *Thebais* had *ten Nomi*, *Delta ten*, and the *Midland sixteen*; only some are of opinion, saith he, that there were as many *Nomi* as *Palaces* in the *Labyrinth*, which were toward *thirty*; but yet the number is uncertain still. We see by this how *ominous* it is for an *Oedipus* to *stumble* at the *threshold*, and how easie a matter it is to *interpret mysteries*, if we may have the *making* of them. We see then no evidence at all for these *co-temporary Dynasties* of *Manetho*; which yet if we should grant, would be a further argument of the *uncertainty* of *heathen Chronology*, when among them *implicite* years are given out to the world for *solid*; so that which way soever *Manetho* his *Dynasties* be taken, they will prove the thing in hand, whether we suppose them at least most part fabulous, or should grant he had taken those in succession to each other, which were *co-existent* with one another.

Syntag. 1. c. 2. p. 7.

Geogr. l. 17.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The uncertain Epocha's of Heathen Chronology.

An account given of the defect of Chronology in the eldest times. Of the Solar year among the Ægyptians, the original of the Epacts, the antiquity of Intercalation among them. Of the several Canicular years; the difference between Scaliger *and* Petavius *considered. The certain* Epocha's *of the* Ægyptian *History no elder than* Nabonasser. *Of the* Grecian *accounts. The fabulousness of the Heroical age of* Greece. *Of the ancient* Grecian *Kingdoms. The beginning of the Olympiads. The uncertain Origins of the Western Nations. Of the Latin Dynasties. The different* Palilia *of* Rome. *The uncertain reckoning* Ab U. C. *Of impostures as to ancient Histories. Of* Annius, Inghiramius, *and others. Of the characters used by Heathen Priests. No sacred characters among the Jews. The partiality and inconsistency of Heathen Histories with each other. From all which the want of credibility in them as to an account of ancient times is clearly demonstrated.*

THE next thing to evidence the *uncertainty* of the *heathen Chronology*, is, *the want of certain parapegmata, or some fixed periods of time, according to which the account of times must be made.* For if there be no certain *Epocha's* by which to reckon the *succession* of *ages*, the *distance* of *intervals*, and all *intervening accidents*, we must of necessity *fluctuate* in continual uncertainties, and have no sure foundation to bottom any account of ancient times upon. The great reason of this defect, is, the little care which those who lived in the *eldest times* had to preserve the *memory* of any *ancient tradition* among themselves, or to convey it to posterity in such a way as might be least liable to imposture. Of all kinds of *Learning*, *Chronology* was the most rude in eldest times; and yet that is well called by *Scaliger*, *The life and soul of History*, without which, *History* is but a *confused lump*, a *mere Mola*, an *indigested piece of flesh, without life or form.* The ancient accounts of the world were merely from *year* to *year*, and that with abundance of *obscurity*, *uncertainty* and *variety*: sometimes going Sect. 1.

ing by the course of the *Moon*, and therein they were as *mutable* as the *Moon* herself, how to conform the *year* regularly to her *motion*; and it was yet greater difficulty to *regulate* it by the *course* of the *Sun*, and to make the accounts of the *Sun* and *Moon* meet. There was so much perplexity and confusion about the ordering of a *single year*, and so long in most *Nations* before they could bring it into any order, that we are not to expect any *fixed periods* by which to find out the succession of ages among them. Among the *Ægyptians* who are supposed most skilfull in the account of the year, it was a long time before they found out any certain course of it. It is agreed by most, that when the *Ægyptian Priests* had found out the form of the year by the *course* of the *Sun* (which *L. 1. c. 50.* is attributed by *Diodorus* to the *Heliopolitan Priests*) yet the year in common use was only of 360 days, which in any great *period of years* must needs cause a *monstrous confusion*, by reason that their *Months* must of necessity by degrees change their place, so that in the great *Canicular year* of 730 *Thoyth*, which was the *beginning* of the *Summer Solstice* in the entrance into that *period*, would be removed into the midst of *Winter*, from whence arose that *Ægyptian Fable* in *Herodotus*, that in the time of their *eldest Kings*, the *Sun had twice changed his rising and setting*; which was only caused by the *Euterp. Vide Scaliger. de Emend. Temp. l. 3. p. 195.* *variation* of their *Months*, and not by any alteration in the course of the Sun. Which defect the *Ægyptian* Priests at last observing, saw a necessity of adding five days to the end of the year, which thence were called ἐπαγόμεναι, which implies they were not anciently in use among them, being afterwards added to make up the course of the year. Which the *Ægyptians* give an account of, as *Plutarch* tells us under *De Iside & Osiri.* this Fable: *Mercury being once at Dice with the Moon, he got from her the 72d. part of the year, which he after added to the 360 days which were anciently the days of the year, which they called* ἐπαγόμεναι, *and therein celebrated the Festivals of their Gods*, thence the names of the several ἐπαγόμεναι were taken from the *Gods*; the first was called Ὀσίεις, it being celebrated in honour of him; the second, Ἀφρώδεις, by which *Scaliger* understands *Anubis*, but *Vossius* more probably the *Senior Orus*; the third to *Typho*; the fourth to *Isis*; the fifth to *Nephtha* the wife of *Typho* and *sister* to *Isis*. This course of the year

De Idol. l. 1. c. 28.

Scaliger

Scaliger thinks that the *Ægyptians* repreſented by the Serpent called Νεὼ, being deſcribed in a round *cirle* biting ſome part of his tail in his mouth, whereby ſaith he, they would have it underſtood, that the form of the year was not perfect without that adjection of five days to the end of the year: For to this day, ſaith he, the *Coptites* and ancient *Ægyptians* call the end of the year νεὼ. It ſeems that afterwards they underſtood likewiſe the neceſſity of intercalation of a day every fourth year, for the ſake of the redundant *quadrant* each *year* above 365 days; which courſe of four years they called their *Canicular year*, becauſe they obſerved its defect in that time one whole day from the riſing of the *Dog-ſtar:* and beſides that they called it ἡλιακὸν ἔτος and ἔτος θεοῦ, *& luſtrum Sothiacum*, from Σῶθις the Dog-ſtar: but *Cenſorinus* denies any uſe of *intercalation* among the *Ægyptians* in their civil year, although their *Sacred* and *Hieroglyphical* years might admit of it. And upon this ground, I ſuppoſe the controverſie between thoſe two learned perſons, *Scaliger* and *Petavius*, concerning the antiquity of *Intercalation* among the *Ægyptians* may be reconciled. For on the one ſide it is apparent, that the *ordinary* or *civil year* did want *intercalation*, by this *teſtimony* of *Cenſorinus*; *Eorum annus civilis ſolos habet dies 365 ſine ullo intercalari; itaq; quadriennium apud eos uno circiter die minus eſt quam naturale quadriennium*; and thence ſaith he, it comes to paſs, that in 1461 years, which was the great *Heliacal year*, it returns to the ſame *beginning*; for then the *Dog-ſtar* ariſeth again upon the firſt day of the month *Thoyth*, as it did at the *beginning* of this great *Canicular year*; and that this kind of *civil year* did continue among them in the time of *Cenſorinus* (which was of the *Dionyſian* account 238) appears by this, that he ſaith in the year wherein he wrote his Book, the *New-moon* of *Thoyth* was before the ſeventh day of the *Calends* of *July*, whereas 100 *years* before, it was before the 12 of the *Calends* of *Auguſt*; whence it is evident, that the *Julian year*, whatever ſome learned men pretend to the contrary, was not in ordinary *uſe* among the *Ægyptians* in that time; and that *Soſigenes* when he corrected the *Roman account*, and brought in the form of the *Julian year*, did not take his pattern from the *Ægyptian year*, but from the *Grecians* of *Alexandria*, who did

De die Natali c. 18.

V. Petav. de doctr. temp. l. 3. c. 2.

Kircher Oedip. Ægypt. Tom. 3. Claſſ. 7. cap 2.

did make uſe of the *quadrant* added to the 365 years, which the *Ægyptians* did not, as appears further by the *golden circle* in the *monument* of *Oſimanduas* (which *Diodorus* ſpeaks of out of *Hecatæus Mileſius*) which was of 365 cubits *compaſs*, and *divided* into ſo many *ſegments* for every day with the obſervations of the *riſing* and *ſetting* of the ſeveral *ſtars*, and the *effects* portended by them. And the *reaſon* why this year continued in civil *uſe* among the *Ægyptians*, is well aſſigned by *Geminus*, that the *Ægyptians* according to a ſuperſtitious obſervation they had, would needs have their *Feſtivals* run through every *day* in the *year*. But now on the other ſide, it is as evident that by continual *obſervation* the *weſt* of the *Ægyptian Prieſts* did diſcern the neceſſity of *intercalation*, and that there wanted ſix *hours* in every *year* to make it *compleat*, which every four years would make the *intercalation* of a day *neceſſary*; ſo much by *Diodorus* is affirmed of the *Theban Prieſts*, who were the beſt *Aſtronomers*, and by *Strabo* both of the *Theban* and *Heliopolitan*; and ſo likewiſe *Horapollo*, whoſe work was to interpret the more abſtruſe *Learning* of the *Ægyptian Prieſts*: *when*, (ſaith he) *the Ægyptians would expreſs a year, they name a quadrant, becauſe from one riſing of the ſtar* Sothis *to another, the fourth part of a day is added, ſo that the year conſiſts of* 365 *days*, (*and a quadrant* muſt be added, becauſe of the *antecedents* and *conſequents*) therefore every *fourth* year they reckon a *ſupernumerary* day. How unjuſtly *Petavius* hath charged *Scaliger* with falſhood in reference to this *teſtimony* of *Horapollo*, meerly becauſe the *citation* did not appear in that Chapter mentioned by *Scaliger* in the Book which *Petavius* uſed, hath been already obſerved by learned men; whereupon *Voſſius* condemns *Petavius* of ſtrange *incogitancy*, becauſe in three *Editions* mentioned by him, *Scaliger*'s citation was right; but *Conringius* hath ſince pleaded in behalf of *Petavius*, that he might make *uſe* of the Edition of *Cauſinus* diſtinct from the other three; whereby we ſee how ſmall a *matter* will beget a *feud* between learned men, eſpecially where *prejudice* hath lodged before, as is too evident in *Petavius* his rough dealing on all occaſions, with that very deſerving perſon *Joſeph Scaliger*. But to return, from hence by degrees the *Ægyptians* proceeded to make greater *periods* of years (as *Eudoxus* carried

Biblioth. l. 1. *c.* 49.

De ſphæra cap. 6.

Bibl. l. 1. *cap.* 50. *Geog. l.* 17.

Hieroglyph. l. 1. *c.* 5.

De Idol. l. 1. *c.* 28. *De Herm. Med. c.* 12.

carried his *Octaeteris* into *Greece* from the *Canicular* year of the *Ægyptians*) they framed from this a greater *Canicular* year, which had as many years as a *Julian* hath days; and Lastly, the greatest *Canicular* year which comprehended four of the greater, and consisted of a period of 1461 years. But thus we see, that the great *periods* of years among them rise gradually, as they grow more skilful in the understanding the *nature* of the *year*; and that they had anciently no certain *periods* to govern themselves by in their *computation* of ancient times. Nay the *Ægyptians* have not, as appears, any *certain Epocha* to go by elder than the *Ægyptian* years of *Nabonasser*, and afterwards from the death of *Alexander*, and *Ptolomy Philadelphus*, and *Augustus* his Victory at *Actium*.

If from the *Ægyptians* we remove our discourse unto the *Grecians*, we are still plunged into greater uncertainties, it being acknowledged by themselves that they had no certain Succession of time before the *Olympiads*. To which purpose the Testimony of *Varro* in *Censorinus* is generally taken notice of, distributing time into three parts, reckoning two of them to be *unknown* and *fabulous*, and the *historical* part of time to begin with the first *Olympiad*. Indeed *Scaliger* and some others are loth to reject all that second part of time as fabulous, which was in the interval between *Deucalion*'s flood and the *Olympiads*; and therefore they had rather call it *Heroical*, though much corrupted with *Fables*, and to think that it was *historical* as to *persons*, but *fabulous* as to the actions of those *persons*. But granting this; yet we are wholly to seek for any certain account of the succession of time and persons for want of some certain *Epocha's*, which like the *Pole star* should guide us in our passage through that boundless *Ocean* of the *Grecian* History. It must be confessed that some of the learned *Heathens* have taken a great deal of pains this way to find out some certain *periods* to fix on in the time before the *Olympiads*, as *Philochorus*, *Apollodorus*, and *Dionysius Halycarnassensis*, and others, who out of their skill in *Astronomy* sought to bring down some certain intervals between the *destruction of Troy*, and the first *Olympick* game of *Pelops*, restored by *Hercules* and *Atreus*. But granting that their *Epocha's* were fixed and certain, that the destruction of *Troy* was upon the 23 of *Thargelion*, the 11th month of the *Attick*

Sect. 2.

Not. in Can. Isagog. l. 3.

tick account, and that the *Olympick* game fell out anſwerably to the ninth of our *July*, and theſe things were evidently proved from *Aſtronomical obſervations*; yet how vaſt an account of time is loſt quite beyond the ſiege of *Troy*! And beſides that, as to all other accidents in the *Intervals* between theſe two *Epocha's* which could not be proved by *Celeſtial obſervations* concurrent with them, they were left at a very great uncertainty ſtill; only they might gueſs whether they approached nearer to one *Epocha* than the other by the *ſeries* of Families and their *Generations* (three of which made a Century of years) whereby they might come to ſome conjectures, but could never arrive at any certainty at all.

Sect. 3. But that which is moſt to our purpoſe is, that all the *Hiſtory* of the *Original* of *Greece*, the Foundations of their ſeveral *Kingdoms*, the ſucceſſion of their firſt Kings, and all that comes under the name of the Hiſtory of their ancient times, is clearly given over by their own moſt skilful *Chronologers*, as matters out of the reach of any clear evidence. Thence come ſuch great differences concerning the antiquity of their ancient Kingdoms; the *Argolick* Kingdom by *Dionyſius Halycarnaſſ.* is ſuppoſed to be the eldeſt, and the *Attick* younger than it by 40 Generations, which according to their computation comes to a 1000 years, which is impoſſible; and yet the *Arcadians*, who gave themſelves out to be elder than the Moon, are ſuppoſed to be younger by him than the *Graſhoppers* of *Athens* by nine *Generations*; and the *Pthiotica*, under *Deucalion*, younger than the *Arcadia* by 42 *Generations*, which *Scaliger* might well ſay were *impoſſible* and *inconſiſtent*. The *Sicyonian* Kingdom is by moſt ſuppoſed to be of greateſt antiquity among the *Grecians*, from which *Varro* began his Hiſtory, as S. *Auſtin* tells us; and yet as to this, *Pauſanias* only reckons the names of ſome *Kings* there, without any ſucceſſion of time among them; and yet as to thoſe names, *Africanus* (and *Euſebius* from him) diſſent from *Pauſanias*; and which is moſt obſervable, *Homer* reckons *Adraſtus*, who is the 23 in the account of *Africanus*, to be the firſt that reigned in *Sicyon*, whoſe time was after the inſtitution of the *Olympick* game by *Pelops*: of him thus *Homer*,

De Civit. Dei, l. 16. *c.* 2.

Il. 3. Καὶ Σικυῶν ὄθεν Ἄδρηστος πρῶτ' ἐμβασίλευεν.

Where

Whereby he expresseth *Adrastus* to be the *first King* of *Sicyon*; and not as *Scaliger* would interpret it, that *Adrastus* was first *King* of the *Sicyonians*, before he was of the *Argives*; for in the time of *Adrastus* at *Sicyon*, either *Atreus*, or *Thyestes* was *King* of the *Argives*: for in the second year of *Phæstus* and *Adrastus* his supposed Predecessor in *Sicyon*, *Atreus* restored the *Olympick* game of *Pelops*, in the 41 year of their reign, and they reigned at *Argi* 65 years; Now that *Phæstus* at *Sicyon* is supposed to reign but eight years; and therefore the reign of *Adrastus* at *Sicyon* falls in with that of *Atreus* and *Thyestes* at *Argi* or *Mycenæ*. Thus we see now how uncertain the account of times was before the beginning of the *Olympiads* among the *Grecians*, which is fully acknowledged by *Diodorus*, and the very reason given which we here insist on, διὰ τὸ μηδὲν παράπηγμα παρειλῆφθαι περὶ τούτων πιστεύομενον, *that there was no certainty in the ancient Grecian history, because they had no certain term* (which he calls *parapegma*, as others *Epocha*, and *Censorinus titulus*) *from whence to deduce their accounts.* But now from the time of the *Olympiads* (i. e. from the first of them after their restoration by *Iphitus*, wherein the names of the Conquerors were ingraven in *Brass tablets* for the purpose) the succession of time is most certain and historical among the *Grecians*; by which account we have from thence a certain way of commensurating the sacred and prophane History. All the difficulty is in what year of sacred History the *Olympiads* began, which *Scaliger* thus finds out. *Censorinus* writes (in the year of Christ 238 which was of the *Julian period* 4951.) that, *De emend temp. l.* 5. that year was from the first *Olympiad* of *Iphitus* 1014, the first *Olympiad* was of the *Julian period* 3938. which was according to our *learned Primate A. M.* 3228, and the 35 of *Uzziah King of Judah*, or the 34 as *Capellus* thinks: So that from henceforward we have a clear account of times, which we have demonstrated to have been so uncertain before.

If we come from the *Greeks* further into these *European* parts, we shall find as much darkness and obscurity as to ancient times, if not more, than in those already discoursed of. For the truth is, the account of times before the *Romans* in *Italy*, *Germany*, old *Gallia* or *Britain*, are scarce fit to be discoursed of under any head than that of impostures. Not *Sect.* 4.

that I think those Nations had lain in a perpetual sleep till the *Romans* waked them into some kind of civility, but that they had no certain way of conveying down the transactions of their own and former times to the view of posterity. On which account we may justly reject all those pretended successions of Kings here in *Britain* from *Gomer* and *Brute* as fabulous: And it will be the less wonder it should be so in those then accounted barbarous Nations, when even among those who were the Planters of knowledge and civility among others, the account of their ancient times is so dark, confused, and uncertain: As it would sufficiently appear to any that would take the pains to examine the succession of the two *first Dynasties* among the *Latines*; the first before *Æneas* his coming into *Italy*, and the second of the *Æneadæ* after; and certainly it will be sufficient ground to question the account of times before, if in the third *Dynasty*, when the succession seems so clear, and so certain an *Epocha* as the building of *Rome*, to deduce their accounts from their *Chronology* be uncertain, which I shall briefly speak to. For although *Porcius Cato* have in *Dionysius* the honour of finding out the first *Palilia* of the City of *Rome* (which was the Feast observed to the honour of the *Goddess Pales*, in the time of which, the foundations of *Rome* were laid) yet there appears no great certainty in his undertaking; for therein he was after contradicted by the *learned Roman Varro*. *Dionysius* tells us that *Cato* found by the *Censors tables* the exact time from the expulsion of the Kings, to the time of the Cities being taking by the *Gauls*; from which time to his own, he could not miss of it from the *Fasti Consulares*; so that it cannot be denied but that *Cato* might have a certain account of times from the *Regifugium* to the time he writ his *Origines*. But what certainty *Cato* could have from the first *Palilia* of the City to the *expulsion* of *Tarquin*, we cannot understand. For the succession of *Kings* must needs be very uncertain, unless it be demonstrated from some publick monuments, or certain records, or some publick actions certainly known to have fallen out precisely in such a year of their several Reigns. Now none of these do occur in the *Roman History*, in all that *Interval* from the *Palilia* to the *Regifugium*; so that not only the whole interval, but the time of every particular *King's* Reign, are very uncertain. And

therefore

therefore *Varro* being destitute of any demonstration of that time, had recourse to *L. Tarrutius Firmanus*, to see if by his skill in *Astronomy* he could certainly find out the first *Polilia* of *Rome*: His answer was, that he found that the City was built in the time of an *Eclipse* of the *Sun*, which was in the 3d year of the sixth *Olympiad*; according to which account *Varro* proceeded, and thence arose the difference between the *Palilia Catoniana* and *Varroniana*; the latter falling out in the 23 of *Iphitus*, the other in the 24. But if we believe *Joseph Scaliger*, there could not be an *Eclipse* of the *Sun*, at the time affirmed by *Tarrutius*: But yet granting an *Eclipse* of the *Sun* then, what certainty can we have of the succession of the several *Kings* afterwards, without which there can be no certain computation *ab Urbe condita*? If then the *Romans*, who had so great advantage of knowing times, and were withal so inquisitive concerning the building of their City (which was a thing of no very remote distance) could attain to no absolute certainty without it, what certainty can we expect as to an account of far ancienter times, either from them or others, when they had no *Censors tables*, nor *Fasti Consulares* to be guided by? And thus much may serve to shew the great uncertainty of *Heathen Chronology*, as to the giving an account of ancient times. *V. de Emend. temp. l. 5 p. 388.*

And yet were it only an uncertainty as to *Chronology*; we might better bear with it; for the mistake meerly in computation of times were not so dangerous (any further than the credibility of the History depends on the computation, as in point of antiquity) if we were but certain that the persons and actions related of them were such as they are reported to be. But that which adds much to the *confusion* and *uncertainty* of *Heathen history*, is, *the frequency of Impostures*, which are more hard to be discovered, in that there are no authentick Histories of those times extant, which hath both given occasion to variety of impostures, and much hindred their discovery. For the curiosity of men leading them back into a search after ancient times, it makes them exceeding credulous in embracing whatever pretends to give them any conduct through those dark and obscure paths of ancient History: And the world hath never been wanting of such as would be ready to abuse the simple credulity of well-meaning, but less wary men; but those ages have been most *feracious* in the *pro-* *Sect. 5.*

duction of ſuch perſons, which have pretended to more Learning than they had. The pretence of Learning made ſuch perſons appear, and the want of it made them not be diſcovered. Thus it was not only of old among the *Chaldean* and *Ægyptian Prieſts*, and the *Grecian Poets* and *Hiſtorians*, of whom we have ſpoken already; but even among thoſe who might have learned more truth from the *Religion* they profeſſed, than to think it ſtood in need of their lyes. For there can be no greater diſparagement offered to truth, than to defend it with any thing but it ſelf, nothing laying truth ſo open to ſuſpicion, as when falſhood comes to be its *advocate:* And a falſe teſtimony diſcovered, doth more prejudice to a good cauſe, than it could any ways advantage it, were it not diſcovered; and therefore their labours have been as ſerviceable to the world who have diſcovered *Impoſtures*, as thoſe who have directly maintained truth againſt its open oppoſers, thoſe being ſo much more dangerous, in that they appear in the diſguiſe of truth, and therefore are with more difficulty diſcovered. Such a one was that *ignis fatuus* that appeared in a kind of *twilight* in the *Chriſtian* world between the former darkneſs of *Barbariſm*, and the approaching light of *knowledge*; I mean *Annius Viterbienſis*, who like *Hannibal* in paſſing the *Alps*, not finding a way ready to his mind, ſets himſelf to burning the woods, and firing the rocks, and diſſolving them with vinegar to make a paſſage through them: So *Annius* being beſet in thoſe *ſnowy* and *gray-headed Alps* of ancient hiſtory, and finding no way clear for him according to his fancy, he labours to *burn down* all certain *Records*, to *eat through* the credit of undoubted Authors, to make a more free paſſage from his own hiſtory, which he deduceth ſuitably to Scripture for the concurrent teſtimony of the eldeſt Hiſtorians. To which purpoſe, a New *Beroſus*, *Manetho*, *Philo*, *Metaſthenes* (as he miſtook for *Megaſthenes*) and *Xenophon* muſt put on a grave diſguiſe, and walk abroad the world with a *mantle* of *Antiquity* about their ſhoulders, although they were nothing elſe but airy *Phantaſms*, covered over with the *Cowl* of the Monk of *Viterbo*. For being himſelf ſomewhat more verſed in the hiſtory of thoſe elder times than generally perſons were in the age he lived in, he made that unhappy uſe of his skill, to play the *Mountebank* with his learning; and to abuſe the credulity of thoſe who have better *ſtomachs* than *palates*, and can ſooner ſwallow down the *compoſi-*

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tions that are given them, than find out the *Ingredients* of them. Thus *Annius* puts a good face on his *new-old Authors*, bids them be bold and confident, and they would fare the better: And the truth is, they tell their story so punctually in all circumstances, in those things which had no certain conveyance to posterity, that that were sufficient ground to any intelligent person to question their authority. But left his Authors should at any time want an *Interpreter* to make out their full meaning, he sets himself a large Commentary upon them; And certainly he was the fittest person in the world to doe it; for, *cujus est condere, ejus est interpretari*; none so fit to explain *Annius* as *Annius* himself. The whole story of this Imposture, how he made the Inscriptions himself, and hid them under ground, how they were digged thence and brought to *Annius*; how *Annius* caused them to be sent to the *Magistrates*, and after published them in the *equipage* they are in, are at large related by that learned *Bishop Antonius Augustinus*, from *Latinus Latinius*. *Dialog.* 11.

From a like quarry to this, came out those other famous *Inscriptions*, walking under the specious title of *Antiquitatum Etruscarum fragmenta*, wherein, besides many palpable incongruities to the customs of those eldest times, discovered partly by *Leo Allatius* in his Discourse concerning them, there are so many particular stories and circumstances related concerning *Noah*'s being in *Italy*, and other things so far beyond any probability of reason, that it is a wonder there are yet any persons pretending to Learning, who should build their discourses upon such rotten and sandy foundations as these *Inscriptions* are. But though *Ixion* might, *Jupiter* would never have been deceived with a *Cloud* instead of *Juno*; so, though persons unacquainted with the lineaments of *truth*, may be easily imposed on with appearances instead of her: yet such persons who have sagacity enough to discern the *air* of her *countenance* from the *paint* of *forgeries*, will never suffer themselves to be over-reached by such vain pretenders. But these *Impostors* are like the *Astrologers* at *Rome*, ever banished, and yet ever there; and so these are ever exploded by all Lovers of *truth*, yet always find some to applaud and entertain them: Although it be more difficult to doe so now in the present light of *knowledge*, and all advantages for *learning*, than it was in those elder times, when the *Heathen Priests* *Sect.* 6.

pre-

pretended to the *Monopoly of Learning* among themſelves, and made it one of their great deſigns to keep all others in dependance on themſelves, thereby to keep up their *veneration* the better among the people. And therefore all the *Records* they had of *Learning* or *Hiſtory*, were carefully lockt up, and preſerved among the *Prieſts*, and leſt at any time others might get a view of them, they were ſure to preſerve them in a *peculiar Character* diſtinct from that in civil and common uſe. By which means the *Heathen Prieſts* had all imaginable opportunities and conveniences for deceiving the ſilly people, and thereby keeping them in an *obſequious Ignorance*, which is never the *Mother* of any true *Devotion*, but of the greateſt *Superſtition*.

Sect. 7. It is well known of the *Ægyptian Prieſts*, that the *ſacred Characters* of their *Temples* were ſeldom made known to any *Diod. l.* 3. but ſuch as were of their own number and family, (the *Prieſthood* being there *hereditary*) or ſuch others as by long converſe had inſinuated themſelves into their ſociety, as ſome of the *Greek Philoſophers* and *Hiſtorians* had done: And yet we have ſome reaſon to think they were not over-free and communicative to ſome of them, by the ſlender account they give of ſeveral things, which are ſuppoſed to be well known among the *Ægyptians*. That the *Phœnician Prieſts* had their *peculiar* and *ſacred Characters* too, is evident from the words of *Philo Byblius* concerning *Sanconiathon*, if we take *Bochartus* his Expoſition of them: He tells us that his Hiſtory was compared, *πῖς γὰρ τῶν ἀδύτων εὑρεθεῖσιν, ἀποκρύφοις Ἀμμωνίων γράμμασιν ἃ οὐκ ἐῶ πᾶσι γνώριμα, with the Inſcriptions in the Temples written in the Ammunean Letters, which are known to few: Literæ Ammuneorum* (ſaith *Bochartus*) *ſunt literæ Templorum, literæ in ſacris exceptæ.* For חַמָּה is the *Sun*, thence חַמָּן the *Temple of the Sun*, whom the *Phœnicians* worſhipped as their principal *Deity*, under the name of *Beel-ſamen, the Lord of Heaven.* The ſame Author tells us out of *Diogenes Laertius*, of a Book of *Democritus*, *περὶ τῶν ἐν Βαβυλῶνι ἱερῶν γραμμάτων*· by which it is evident that the *Babylonian Prieſts* had their *ſacred Characters* too: And of a Teſtimony of *Theodoret* of all the *Græcian Temples*, *ἐν πῖς Ἑλληνικῖς ναοῖς εἶναι πῖνας χαρακτῆρας γραμμάτων, οὓς ἱερατικοὺς προσηγόρευον, that they had ſome peculiar Characters which were called ſacred.* But that learned Author thinks

Euſeb. Præp. Evang. l. 1. *c.* 10.

Geogr. ſacr. p. 2. *l.* 2. *c.* 17.

Quæſt. in Gen. 61.

thinks there is no necessity of understanding it peculiarly of the *Græcians*, because the *Greek Fathers* called all *Heathens* by the name of *Greeks*; but if so, the Testimony is the larger, and amounts to an universal Testimony of the *Heathen Temples*.

Sect. 8.

Neither was this only peculiar to *them*, if we believe some persons of greater *Learning* than *Judgment*, who attribute this distinction of *sacred* and *vulgar Characters* to the *Jews* as well as others, but without any probability of reason. For these learned men being strongly possessed with the opinion of the *modern Jews* concerning the *Antiquity* of the present *Hebrew Characters*, and finding themselves pressed not only with the *Testimony* of some *ancient Rabbins*, but with the stronger evidence of the *ancient shekels* about *Solomon*'s time, inscribed with the *Samaritan letters*, have at last found this *Evasion*, that the *Samaritan letters* were in *vulgar use*; but the present *Characters* were then *sacred*, and not made *common* till after the time of the *Captivity*. But this seems to be a mere *shift*, found out by some modern *Jews*, and greedily embraced by their Followers, because thereby they are in hopes to evade the strength of the contrary arguments, which otherwise they can find no probable solution of. And a mere shift it will appear to be, to any one that considers on how little ground of reason it stands: For none of those reasons which held for such a distinction of Characters among the *Heathens*, can have any place among the *Jews*. For it was never any part of *God's* design to have the Law kept from the peoples view. *Truth* is never so fearfull of being *seen abroad*; it is only falshood that walks under disguises, and must have its hiding-places to retreat to: Nay, *God* expressly commanded it as a duty of all the *Jews*, to search and study his Law, which they could not doe, if it were locked up from them in an *unknown Character*. Did not *God* himself promulge it among the people of *Israel* by the *Ministry of Moses?* Did he not command it to be *as frontlets between their eyes*, and *signs upon their hands* (not that *Phylacteries* should be made of the Law to wear, as the *Pharisees* interpreted it, and others from them have mistaken) but that they should have the *Law* in continual remembrance, as if it were always between their eyes, and ingraven upon their hands. Again, if we suppose the *Law* to be among the people, but in the *vulgar character*,

Exod. 13. 16. Deut. 6. 8.

I would

I would fain know, what *ſanctity*, *majeſty*, and *authority* there was in that *character* more than in the words and matter? and if there were, how comes the *vulgar* uſe of it to be no where forbidden? and how durſt *Ezra*, as is ſuppoſed, after the *Captivity*, profane ſo *ſacred* a thing by expoſing it to *common* uſe? But granting them yet further, that it was *lawfull*, but not *uſefull*, to make uſe of that *ſacred character*; I demand then, how comes that *diſuſe* to continue ſo punctually till the time of *Ezra*, and that it ſhould never be divulged before? when there was ſo great reaſon to make it common, ſince the *ſquare letters* are leſs operoſe, more expedite and facile, than the *Samaritan*, which is, when time ſerves, uſed as a plea for their great *Antiquity*. But yielding yet more, that the Sacred *Character* was only uſed for the *authentick copy* of the *Law*, which was to decide all differences of other copies (which ſome run to as their laſt ſhift) I appeal to any man's *reaſon*, whether this be not the moſt improbable of all? For how could ſuch a copy be the *Judge* of all others, which could not be read or underſtood by thoſe who appealed to it? Or was the knowledge and reading of this *character* peculiar to the *High Prieſt*, and conveyed down as a *Cabala* from one to another? but how many incongruities would follow hence, in caſe one *High Prieſt* ſhould die before his Son was capable of underſtanding the letters, and ſo that Sacred treaſure muſt needs be loſt; or had they it all by *inſpiration*, and underſtood the *Sacred Character* by *Urim* and *Thummim?* Thus every way, this opinion among the *Jews* is preſſed with inconveniences, but it was moſt ſuitable to the *Heathen Prieſts* to maintain a *Meum* and *Tuum* between their own Character and the vulgar; For hereby they prohibited all prying into their myſteries by any, but thoſe who had the ſame *Intereſt* with themſelves, and therefore were unlikely to diſcover any thing that might leſſen their reputation. Whereas, had there been nothing but *Truth* in their *Records*, or that *Truth* had been for their *Intereſt*, what need had there been of ſo great reſervedneſs and privacy? but when the diſcovery of truth would undeceive the world, it was their *Intereſt* to lock it up, and to give out ſuch things to the *vulgar*, which might advance themſelves and pleaſe them; which *artifices* of theirs give no ſmall ground to *queſtion* the *credibility* of their *Hiſtories*.

Eſpecially

Eſpecially if we add what we promiſed in the *laſt place*, to ſhew the want of *credibility* in the report of ancient times among them, which was not only *defectiveneſs*, and *uncertainty*, but *apparent partiality to themſelves, and inconſiſtency with each other*. How evident is it in all theſe Nations we have ſpoken to, how much they ſtrive to *inhance* the *reputation* of their own Nation, and to that end blend the Hiſtory of other Nations with their own, to make theirs ſeem the greater? How much do the *Ægyptians* tell us of the excellency of their ancient Laws and Government? and yet how evident is it, from their own Hiſtories, that no ſuch Laws were obſerved by their Kings as they ſpeak of? Can we think that ſuch Kings as *Chemmis* and the reſt of them, who built thoſe vaſt ſtructures of the *Pyramids*, and imployed *Myriads* of men for ſo many years for the doing of them, would be content to be ſo dieted by their *Laws*, as *Hecatæus* and *Diodorus* tell us they were to be? Nay it ſeems to be very ſuſpicious, that the great enterprizes of their famous *Seſooſis* are meerly *fabulous*, and ſome think an attributing to themſelves, what was done by the *Aſſyrian Emperour* in his time. By which we may gueſs, what to think of the great *Conqueſts* of *Oſiris* and *Iſis*, and their ſubduing almoſt the whole world to them. And it is moſt evident how partial the *Ægyptians* are in diſſembling their greateſt loſſes; as is clear in the ſtory of the *Conqueſt* of *Pharao Neco* by *Nebuchadnezzar*, Jer. 46. 12. of which there is not the leaſt mention in *Herodotus* or *Diodorus*; But on the contrary, *Herodotus* tells us this *Necos*, as he calls him, conquered the *Syrians* at *Magdalos*; and the ſtory of *Vaphres* and *Amaſis* in him ſeems to be only a diſguiſe of *Nebuchadnezzar's* Conqueſt; onely leſt men ſhould think them conquered by a *Foreigner*, they make *Amaſis* to be an *Ægyptian Plebeian*. Again, what a vaſt number of *Cities* doth *Diodorus* tell us of that were in *Ægypt* in their eldeſt times? no leſs than 18000. when yet himſelf confeſſeth in the time of *Ptolomæus Lagi*, there were reckoned but ſomewhat above 3000 Cities, and then Ægypt was the moſt *populous* that ever it had been. How probable doth this ſound, that in thoſe eldeſt times ſuch vaſt multitudes of Cities ſhould be erected? But the truth is, it is not unſuitable to their opinion of the production of the firſt men, which were cauſed, ſay they, by the

Sect. 9.

Lib. 2.

Biblioth. l. 1

heat of *Sun*, and the *mud* of *Nilus*; and it is certain then they might be the moſt *populous Nation* in the world: for there could be no defect as to either *efficient* or *material* cauſe, there being *mud* enough to *produce Myriads*, and the *Sun* hot enough to *impregnate* it. The *partiality* of other Nations hath been already diſcourſed of in our paſſage; and ſo likewiſe hath their *mutual repugnancy* to, and *inconſiſtency* with, each other: Which yet might be more fully manifeſted from the *contradictions* in reference to the *Ægyptian Hiſtory* between *Manetho*, *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, *Dicearchus*, *Eratoſthenes*, and all who have ſpoken of it; as to the *Aſſyrian Empire* between *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, and *Julius Africanus*; as to the *Perſian Empire* between *Herodotus* and *Cteſias*, and thoſe in no inconſiderable things, as is evident in *Photius* his *excerpta* out of him. Among the *Grecians* we have already diſcovered it as to their *Hiſtory* and *Geography*; and if we ſhould enter into their *Theology*, and the Hiſtory of that, we ſhould find their other differences inconſiderable, if compared with theſe. Of which we may partly make a conjecture by the incredible ſpite that is born by the graveſt *Greek Authours*, as *Strabo*, *Plutarch*, and others, towards *Eumerus Siculus*, for offering to deliver the Hiſtory of *Jupiter*, which he ſaith, he tranſcribed from the *golden pillar in the Temple of* Jupiter Triphyllius *in* Panchotis.

But I ſuppoſe enough hath been diſcovered already, to prove that there is no credibility in any of thoſe *Heathen Hiſtories*, which pretend to give an acconut of ancient times, there being in all of them ſo much defect and inſufficiency, ſo great uncertainty and confuſion, ſo much partiality and inconſiſtency with each other. It remains now that I proceed to demonſtrate the credibility of that account of ancient times, which is reported in the Sacred Scriptures, which will be the ſecond part of our Task.

BOOK

BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

The certainty of the Writings of *Moſes*.

In order to the proving the truth of Scripture-hiſtory, ſeveral Hypotheſes laid down. The firſt concerns the reaſonableneſs of preſerving the ancient Hiſtory of the world in ſome certain Records, from the importance of the things, and the inconveniencies of meer Tradition or conſtant Revelation. The ſecond concerns the certainty that the Records under Moſes *his name, were undoubtedly his. The certainty of a matter of fact enquired into in general, and proved as to this particular by univerſal Conſent, and ſettling a Common-wealth upon his Laws. The impoſſibility of an Impoſtor as to the Writings of* Moſes *demonſtrated. The pleas to the contrary largely anſwered.*

HAVING ſufficiently demonſtrated the want of *credibility* in the account of the ancient times, given by thoſe Nations who have made the greateſt pretence to *Learning* and *Antiquity* in the world, we now proceed to evince the *credibility* and *certainty* of that account which is given us in *ſacred Scriptures*: In order to which I ſhall premiſe theſe following *Hypotheſes*. *Sect.* 1.

It ſtands to the greateſt reaſon, that an account of things ſo concerning and remarkable, ſhould not be always left to the uncertainty of an oral Tradition; but ſhould be timely entred into certain Records, to be preſerved to the memory of poſterity. For it being of concernment to the world, in order to the Eſtabliſhment of belief as to future things, to be fully ſetled *Hyp.* 1.

in the belief *that all things paſt were managed by Divine Providence*, there muſt be ſome certain Records of former Ages, or elſe the mind of Man will be perpetually *hovering* in the greateſt uncertainties: Eſpecially where there is ſuch a mutual *dependence* and *concatenation* of one thing with another, as there is in all the Scripture-hiſtory. For take away but any one of the main Foundations of the *Moſaical hiſtory*, all the *Superſtructure* will be exceedingly weakned, if it doth not fall quite to the ground. For Man's *obligation* to *obedience* unto God, doth neceſſarily ſuppoſe his *original* to be from him; his hearkning to any *propoſals* of *favour* from God, doth ſuppoſe his *Apoſtaſie* and *fall*; God's *deſigning* to ſhew *mercy* and *favour* to fallen Man, doth ſuppoſe that there muſt be ſome way whereby the *Great Creator* muſt *reveal* himſelf as to the *Conditions* on which fallen Man may expect a *recovery*; the *revealing* of theſe *Conditions* in ſuch a way whereon a *ſuſpicious* (becauſe *guilty*) *creature* may firmly rely, doth ſuppoſe ſo certain a *recording* of them, as may be leaſt liable to any ſuſpicion of impoſture or deceit. For although nothing elſe be in it ſelf neceſſary from *God* to *Man*, in order to his Salvation, but the bare *revealing* in a certain way the *Terms* on which he muſt expect it; yet conſidering the unbounded Nature of *Divine Goodneſs*, reſpecting not only the good of ſome particular Perſons, but of the whole *Society* of *mankind*, it ſtands to the greateſt reaſon that ſuch a *Revelation* ſhould be ſo *propounded*, as might be with equal *certainty* conveyed to the *community* of *mankind*. Which could not with any ſuch evidence of *credibility* be done by *private* and *particular Revelations* (which give ſatisfaction only to the inward Senſes of the partakers of them) as by a publick *recording* of the matters of *Divine Revelation* by ſuch a *Perſon* who is enabled to give the world all *reaſonable ſatisfaction*, that what he did was not of any private deſign of his own head; but that he was *deputed* to it by no leſs than *Divine Authority*. And therefore it ſtands to the higheſt reaſon, that where *Divine Revelation* is *neceſſary* for the certain requiring of *Aſſent*, the *matter* to be *believed* ſhould have a *certain uniform conveyance* to Mens minds, rather than that perpetually *New Revelations* ſhould be required for the making known of thoſe things; which being once *recorded*, are not liable to ſo many

impoſtures

impoſtures as the other way might have been under pretended *Revelations*. For then Men are not put to a continual Trial, of every Perſon pretending *Divine Revelation*, as to the evidences which he brings of *Divine Authority*, but the great *matters* of concernment being already *recorded* and *atteſted* by all *rational evidence* as to the truth of the things, their minds therein reſt ſatisfied without being under a *continual heſitancy*, leſt the *Revelation* of one ſhould *contradict* another.

Sect. 2. For ſuppoſing that *God* had left the *matters* of *Divine Revelation* unrecorded at all, but left them to be *diſcovered* in every Age by a *ſpirit* of *prophecy*, by ſuch a multitude as might be ſufficient to inform the world of the truth of the things; we cannot but conceive that an innumerable Company of *croaking Enthuſiaſts* would be continually pretending *Commiſſions* from Heaven, by which the minds of Men would be left in continual *diſtraction*, becauſe they would have no certain *infallible rules* given them, whereby to difference the *good* and *evil ſpirit* from each other. But now ſuppoſing God to inſpire ſome particular Perſons, not only to *reveal*, but to *record Divine Truths*, then whatever *evidences* can be brought *atteſting* a *Divine Revelation* in them, will likewiſe prove the undoubted *certainty* and *infallibility* of thoſe writings, it being impoſſible that Perſons employed by a *God* of *truth* ſhould make it their deſign to impoſe upon the world; which gives us a *rational account*, why the *wiſe God* did not ſuffer the *Hiſtory* of the *world* to lie ſtill *unrecorded*, but made choice of ſuch a *perſon* to record it, who gave abundant evidence to the world that he acted no private deſign, but was peculiarly employed by *God* himſelf for the doing of it, as will appear afterwards. Beſides, we find by our former Diſcourſe, how liable the moſt certain *Tradition* is to be corrupted in progreſs of time, where there are no ſtanding Records, though it were at firſt delivered by Perſons of undoubted credit. For we have no reaſon to doubt, but that the *Tradition of the old World*, the *flood* and the *conſequences* of it, with the *nature* and *worſhip* of the *true God*, were at firſt ſpread over the greateſt part of the world in its firſt *Plantations*; yet we ſee how ſoon for want of certain *conveyance*, all the ancient *Tradition* was *corrupted* and abuſed into the greateſt *Idolatry*. Which might be leſs wondered at, had

had it been only in thoſe parts which were furtheſt remote from the ſeat of thoſe grand Tranſactions; but thus we find it was even among thoſe *families* who had the neareſt reſidence to the place of them, and among thoſe Perſons who were not far off in a lineal *deſcent* from the Perſons mainly concerned in them; as is moſt evident in the *family* out of which *Abraham* came (who was himſelf the tenth from *Noah*) yet of them it is ſaid, *that they ſerved other Gods.* How unlikely then was it, that this *Tradition* ſhould be afterwards preſerved entire, when the People *God* had peculiarly choſen to himſelf, were ſo mixed among the *Ægyptians*, and ſo prone to the *Idolatries* of the Nations round about them, and that even after *God* had given them a written *Law atteſted* with the greateſt *miracles*? what would they have done then, had they never been brought forth of *Ægypt* by ſuch *ſigns* and *wonders*, and had no certain Records left to preſerve the Memory of former Ages? Thus we ſee how much it ſtands to the greateſt reaſon, that ſo memorable things ſhould be digeſted into ſacred Records.

Joſh. 24. 2.

Sect. 3. *Hyp.* 2. *We have as great certainty that* Moſes *was the Author of the Records going under his name, as we can have of any matter of fact done at ſo great a diſtance of time from us* We are to conſider that there are two very diſtinct Queſtions to be thought of, concerning a *Divine Revelation* to any Perſon at a conſiderable diſtance of time from us; and thoſe are *what evidences can be given that the matters recorded are of a true divine revelation*; *and what evidence we have of the truth of the matter of fact, that ſuch things were recorded by ſuch perſons.* They who do not carefully diſtinguiſh between theſe two Queſtions, will ſoon run themſelves into an inextricable Labyrinth, when they either ſeek to underſtand themſelves, or explain to others the grounds on which they believe the *Scriptures* to be *the Word of God.* The firſt ſtep in order to which muſt be the proving the *undoubted certainty of the matter of fact*, or the truth of the Hiſtory, that ſuch *perſons* were *really exiſtent*, and did either *do* or *record* the things we ſpeak of: After this, ſucceeds the other to prove, not only the *real exiſtence* of the things, but that the *perſons* who *recorded* the things, were *aſſiſted* by an *infallible Spirit*; then there can be no reaſon at all to doubt, but thoſe records

are

are the Word of God. The first of these, is, that which at present we enquire after, the certainty of the matter of fact, that the Records under the name of *Moses* were undoubtedly his. And here it will be most unreasonable for any to seek for further *evidence* and *demonstration* of it, than the *matter* to be proved is *capable* of. But if they should, I suppose we have sufficient reason to demonstrate the folly of such a demand, and that on these accounts.

1. Whoever yet undertook to bring *matters* of *fact* into *Mathematical demonstrations*, or thought he had ground to question the certainty of any thing that was not proved in a *Mathematical* way to him? who would ever undertake to prove that *Archimedes* was killed at *Syracuse* by any of the *demonstrations* he was then about? or that *Euclide* was the undoubted Author of the *Geometry* under his name? or do men question these things for want of such *demonstrations*? Yet this is all we at present desire, but the same liberty here which is used in any thing of a like nature. 1.

2. I demand of the *person* who denies this *moral certainty* to be *sufficient* for an *assent*, whether he doth question every thing in the world, which he was not present at the doing of himself? If he be peremptorily resolved to *believe* nothing but *what* he *sees*, he is fit for nothing but a *Voyage* to *Anticyræ*, or to be soundly *purged* with *Hellebore* to free him from those *cloudy humours* that make him suspect the whole world to be an *imposture*. But we cannot suppose any man so destitute of reason, as to question the truth of every matter of fact which he doth not see himself; if he doth then *firmly believe* any thing, there must be supposed sufficient *grounds* to induce him to such a belief. And then what ground can there be to question the *certainty* of such things which have as great evidence as any of those things have which he most firmly believes? and this is all we desire from him. 2.

3. Do we not see that the most *concerning* and *weighty actions* of mens *lives*, are built on no other *foundation* than this *moral certainty*? yet men do not in the least question the truth of the thing they rely upon: As is most evident in all *titles* to *estates* derived from *Ancestors*, either by *donation* or *purchase*: In all *trading*, which goes upon the *moral certainty*, that there are such places as the *Indies*, or *France*, or *Spain*, &c. 3.

In

In all *journeyings*, that there is ſuch a place, as that I am going to, and this is the way thither; for theſe we have but this *moral certainty*; for the *contrary* to both theſe are *poſſible*, and the *affirmatives* are *indemonſtrable*. In *eating* and *drinking* there is a *poſſibility* of being poiſoned by every bit of meat or drop of drink; do we therefore continually doubt, whether we ſhall be ſo or no? *Chiefly* this is ſeen in all *natural affection* and piety in *Children* towards *Parents*, which undoubtedly ſuppoſe the truth of that, which it was *impoſſible* they could be *witneſſes* of themſelves; *viz. their coming out of their Mothers wombs.* And doth any one think this ſufficient ground to queſtion his Mother, becauſe the contrary is impoſſible to be demonſtrated to him? In ſhort, then, either we muſt deſtroy all *Hiſtorical faith* out of the world, and believe nothing (though never ſo much atteſted) but what we ſee our ſelves or elſe we muſt acknowledge, that a *moral certainty* is a *ſufficient foundation* for an *undoubted aſſent*, not ſuch a one *cui non poteſt ſubeſſe falſum*, but ſuch a one *cui non ſubeſt dubium*, *i. e.* an *aſſent undoubted*, though not *infallible*. By which we ſee what little reaſon the *Atheiſt* on one ſide can have to queſtion the *truth* of the *Scriptures*, as to the Hiſtory of it; and what little ground the *Papiſts* on the other ſide have to make a *pretence* of the *neceſſity* of *infallibility*, as to the *propoſal* of ſuch things where *moral certainty* is *ſufficient*, that is, to the *matter of fact*.

Sect. 4. Which I now come to prove, as to the ſubject in hand; viz. *That the writings of* Moſes *are undoubtedly his*, which I prove by a *two-fold* Argument: 1. *An univerſal conſent of perſons, who were beſt able to know the truth of the things in queſtion.* 2. *The ſetling of a Commonwealth upon the Laws delivered by* Moſes. 1. *The univerſal Conſent of perſons moſt capable of judging in the Caſe in hand.* I know nothing the moſt ſcrupulous and inquiſitive mind can poſſible deſire in order to ſatisfaction, concerning any matter of fact, beyond an *univerſal Conſent* of ſuch perſons who have a greater *capacity* of *knowing* the *truth* of it than we can have: And thoſe are all ſuch perſons who have lived neareſt thoſe times when the things were done, and have beſt underſtood the Affairs of the times when the things were pretended to be done. Can we poſſibly conceive, that among the people of the *Jews*, who

who were so exceedingly prone to transgress the *Law* of *Moses*, and to *fall* into *Idolatry*, but if there had been any the least suspicion of any falsity or imposture in the writings of *Moses*, the ring-leaders of their revolts would have sufficiently promulged it among them, as the most *plausible plea* to draw them off from the worship of the true *God*? Can we think that a Nation and Religion so *maligned* as the *Jewish* were, could have escaped *discovery*, if there had been any deceit in it, when so many lay in wait continually to expose them to all *Contumelies* imaginable? Nay, among themselves in their frequent *Apostasies*, and occasions given for such a pretence, how comes this to be never *heard* of, nor in the least questioned, whether the *Law* was *undoubtedly* of *Moses* his writing or no? What an excellent plea would this have been for *Jeroboam's Calves* in *Dan* and *Bethel*: for the *Samaritans Temple* on *Mount Gerizim*, could any the least suspicion have been raised among them, concerning the *authentickness* of the *fundamental Records* of the *Jewish Commonwealth*? And which is most observable, the *Jews* who were a people strangely *suspicious* and *incredulous*, while they were *fed* and *cloathed* with *miracles*, yet could never find ground to question this. Nay, and *Moses* himself, we plainly see, was hugely *envied* by many of the *Israelites* even in the *wilderness*, as is evident in the *Conspiracy* of *Corah* and his complices, and that on this very ground, *that he took too much upon him*; how unlikely then is it, that amidst so many enemies he should dare to venture any thing into *publick records*, which was not most *undoubtedly true*; or undertake to prescribe a *Law* to oblige the people to posterity? Or that after his own Age any thing should come out under his name, which would not be presently detected by the *emulatours* of his glory? What then, is the thing it self *incredible*? surely *not*, that *Moses* should write the records we speak of. Were not they able to understand the *truth* of it? What? not those, who were in the same Age, and conveyed it down by a certain tradition to posterity? Or did not the *Israelites* all constantly *believe* it? What? not they, who would sooner part with their *lives* and *fortunes*, than admit any *variation* or alteration as to their *Law*?

Sect. 5. Well, but if we ſhould ſuppoſe *the whole Jewiſh Nation partial to themſelves, and that out of honour to the memory of ſo great a perſon as* Moſes, *they ſhould attribute their ancient Laws and Records to him:* Which is all that *Infidelity* its ſelf can imagine in this Caſe; Yet this cannot be with any ſhadow of reaſon pretended. For,

1. 1. Who were thoſe *perſons*, who did give out this *Law* to the *Jews* under *Moſes* his name? Certainly they, who undertake to *contradict* that which is received by *common conſent*, muſt bring ſtronger and clearer evidence than that on which that conſent is grounded; or elſe their *exceptions* deſerve to be rejected with the higheſt indignation. What proof can be then brought, that not only the *Jewiſh Nation*, but the whole *Chriſtian world* hath been ſo lamentably *befooled* to believe thoſe things with an undoubted aſſent, which are only the contrivances of ſome cunning men?

2. 2. At what time could theſe things be contrived? Either while the *memory* of *Moſes* and his actions were *remaining*, or *afterwards*. Firſt, how could it poſſibly be, when his *memory* was *remaining*? for then all things were ſo *freſh* in their *memories*, that it was *impoſſible* a thing of this univerſal nature could be forged of him. If *after*, then I demand, whether the people had obſerved the *Law* of *Moſes* before or no? if *not*, then they muſt certainly know it at the time of its *promulgation* to be *counterfeit*; for had it been from *Moſes*, it would have been obſerved before their times; *if it was obſerved before*, then either *continually* down from the time of *Moſes*, or not? If *continually down*, then it was of *Moſes* his doing, if we ſuppoſe him to have had that *Authority* among the people which the *objection* ſuppoſeth; *if not*, then ſtill the nearer *Moſes* his time, the more *difficult* ſuch a *counterfeiting* could be; becauſe the *Conſtitutions* which *Moſes* had left among them, would have remained in their *memories*, whereby they would eaſily reject all *pretences* and *counterfeits*.

3. 3. How can we conceive the Nation of the *Jews* would have ever embraced ſuch a *Law*, had it not been of *Moſes* his enacting among them in that ſtate of time when he did? For then the people were in fitteſt capacity to receive a *Law*, being grown a *great people*, and therefore *neceſſary* to have *Laws*;

Laws; *newly delivered from bondage*, and therefore *wanting Laws* of their own; and *entring into a setled state of Commonwealth*, which was the most proper *season* of *giving Laws*.

Sect. 6. These *considerations* make it so clear, that it is almost *impossible*, to conceive the Nation of the *Jews* could have their *Laws* given to them but at the time of their being in the *wilderness*, before they were setled in *Canaan*. For suppose we at present, to gratifie so far the *objection*, that these *Laws* were brought forth long after the *constitution* of the *government* and the national settlement, under *Moses* his name; how *improbable*, nay how *impossible* is it *to alter* the *fundamental Laws* of a Nation after long *settlement*? what *confusion of interests* doth this bring? what *disturbance* among all *sorts* of *people*, who must be *disseised* of their *rights*, and brought to such strange unwonted *customs* so seemingly against their *interests*, as many of the *Constitutions* among the *Jews* were? For can we imagine, that a people always *devoted* to their *own interest*, would after it had been quietly setled in their Land, by *Constitutions* after the custom of other Nations, presently under a pretence of a *copy* of *Laws* found (that were pretended to be given by one in former Ages of great esteem, called *Moses*) *throw open* all their former *inclosures*, and part with their former *Laws*, for these of which they have no *evidence*, but the words of those that told it them? We have a clear instance for this among the *Romans*; although there were great evidence given of the *undoubted certainty*, that the *Books* found in *Numa*'s grave by *Petilius* were *his*, yet because they were adjudged by the *Senate* to be against the present *Laws*, they were without further enquiry adjudged to be burnt. Was not here the greatest likelihood that might be, that these should have taken place among the *Romans*, for the great *veneration* for *wisdom* which *Numa* was in among them, and the great evidence that these were *certain remainders* of his, wherein he gave a true account of the *superstitions* in use among them? yet lest the *state* should be *unsetled* by it, they were prohibited so much as a publick *view*, when the *Prætor* had *sworn* they were against the established *Laws*. Can we then conceive the *Jewish Nation* would have embraced so *burdensome* and *ceremonious* a *Law* as *Moses*'s was, had it been brought among them in such a way as the *Books*

of *Numa*, though with all imaginable *evidence*, that it was *undoubtedly his*, eſpecially when they were engaged to the *obſervation* of ſome *Laws* or *Cuſtoms* already, by which their *Commonwealth* had been eſtabliſhed? And withall theſe *Laws* of *Moſes* ſeeming ſo much againſt the *intereſt* and *good husbandry* of a *Nation*, as all the *neighbour Nations* thought, who for that accuſed them to be an *idle* and *ſloathful people*, as they judged by their *reſting wholly one day in ſeven, the great and many ſolemn feaſts they had, the repairing of all the males to* Jeruſalem *thrice a year*; *the Sabbatical years, years of Jubilee*, &c. Theſe things were apparently againſt the *intereſt* of ſuch a *Nation*, whoſe great *ſubſiſtence* was upon *paſturage* and *agriculture*. So that it is evident theſe *Laws* reſpected not the *outward intereſt* of the *Nation*, and ſo could not be the *contrivance* of any *Politicians* among them, but did immediately aim at the *honor* of the *God* whom they *ſerved*, for whom they were to part even with their *civil intereſts*: The doing of which by a people generally taken notice of for a particular *Love* of their own *concernments*, is an *impregnable argument* theſe *Laws* could not take place among them, had they not been given by *Moſes* at the time of their *unſettlement*, and that their future *ſettlement* did depend upon their preſent *obſervation* of them; which is an evidence too that they could be of no leſs that *divine original*: Which was more than I was to prove at preſent.

Sect. 7. 4. Were not theſe writings undoubtedly *Moſes*'s; whence ſhould the *neighbour Nations* about the *Jews* notwithſtanding the hatred of the *Jewiſh Religion*, retain ſo venerable an opinion of the *wiſdom* of *Moſes*? The *Ægyptians* accounted him one of their *Prieſts* (which notes the eſteem they had of his learning) as appears by the *teſtimonies* produced out of *Chæremon* and *Manetho* by *Joſephus*. *Diodorus Siculus* ſpeaks of him with great *reſpect* among the famous *Legiſlatours*, and ſo doth *Strabo*, who ſpeaks in commendation of the Religion eſtabliſhed by him. The teſtimony of *Longinus* is ſufficiently known, that *Moſes was no man of any vulgar wit* (οὐκ ὁ τυχὼν ἀνὴρ) *Chalcidius* calls him *ſapientiſſimus Moſes* (although I muſt not diſſemble that *Chalcidius* hath been, I think, undeſervedly reckoned among *heathen writers*, though he *comments* on *Plato*'s *Timæus*, it being moſt probable that he was a *Chriſtian*

C. App l. 1. *Bib. l.* 1. *Geog.* 16. *De ſublim.*

stian Platonist, which might more probably make *Vanimus* call him *circumforaneum blateronem*) but though we exempt *Chalcidius* out of the number of those *Heathens*, who have born testimony to the *wisdom* of *Moses*, yet there are number enough besides him produced by *Justin Martyr*, *Cyril*, and others, whose evidence is clear and full to make us undoubtedly believe, that there could never have been so *universal* and *uninterrupted* a *tradition* concerning the *writings* and *Laws* of *Moses*, had they not been certainly his, and conveyed down in a continual succession from his time to our present age. Which will be yet more clear, if we consider in the second place, *that the national Constitution and settlement of the Jews, did depend on the truth of the Laws and Writings of* Moses. Can we have more undoubted evidence, that there were such persons as *Solon*, *Lycurgus*, and *Numa*, and that the *Laws* bearing their names were theirs, than the *History* of the several *Commonwealths* of *Athens*, *Sparta*, and *Rome*, who were governed by those *Laws?* When *writings* are not of *general concernment*, they may be more easily *counterfeited*; but when they concern the *rights*, *privileges*, and *government* of a Nation, there will be enough whose *interest* will lead them to *prevent impostures*. It is no easie matter to *forge* a *Magna Charta*, and to *invent Laws*; mens *caution* and *prudence* is never so *quick-sighted* as in *matters* which *concern* their *estates* and *freeholds*. The *general interest* of men lies contrary to such impostures, and therefore they will prevent their obtaining among them. Now the *Laws* of *Moses* are *incorporated* into the very *Republick* of the *Jews*, and their subsistence and Government depends upon them, their *Religion* and *Laws* are so *interwoven* one with the other, that one cannot be broken off from the other. Their *right* to their *temporal possessions* in the *land of Canaan depends* on their *owning* the *Sovereignty* of *God* who gave them to them; and on the truth of the *History recorded* by *Moses* concerning the *promises* made to the *Patriarchs*. So that on that account it was impossible those *Laws* should be *counterfeit* on which the welfare of a Nation depended, and according to which they were governed ever since they were a *Nation*. So that I shall now take it to be sufficiently proved, that the *writings* under the name of *Moses* were *undoubtedly his*; for none, who acknowledge the

V. Vos. de Idol. l. 2. c. 45.

V. Grot. An. de Ver. Rel. Chr. l. 2.

the *Laws* to have been his, can have the face to deny the *Hiſtory*, there being ſo neceſſary a *connexion* between them; and the *book* of *Geneſis* being nothing elſe but a general and very neceſſary *introduction* to that which follows. I deny not but the *hiſtory* of *Moſes* might, according to the *tradition* of the *Jews*, and the *belief* of others, be reviſed by *Ezra*, or the *men* of the *great Synagogue* after the *Jews* return from captivity, as appears by the *names* of *places*, and other paſſages not ſuitable to the time of *Moſes*; but I utterly deny that the *Pentateuch* was not of *Moſes* his penning, or that it was only a *Collection* out of the *Diaries* and *Annals* of the *Nation:* For throughout the *Scripture* the very hiſtorical paſſages are attributed to *Moſes*, and in all probability the *Samaritan Pentateuch* bears date before the *Captivity*; by which it ſtill appears that thoſe Books are truly the Books of *Moſes*.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Moses his certain knowledge of what he writ.

The third Hypothesis concerns the certainty of the matter of Moses *his History; that gradually proved: First,* Moses *his knowledge cleared, by his education, and experience, and certain information. His education in the wisdom of* Ægypt; *what that was. The old* Ægyptian *learning enquired into; the conveniences for it. Of the* Ægyptian *Priests.* Moses *reckoned among them for his knowledge. The Mathematical, Natural, Divine, and Moral learning of* Ægypt: *their Political wisdom most considerable. The advantage of* Moses *above the Greek Philosophers, as to wisdom and reason.* Moses *himself an eye-witness of most of his history: the certain uninterrupted tradition of the other part among the Jews, manifested by rational evidence.*

HAving thus far cleared our way, we come to the third Hypothesis, which is, *There are as manifest proofs of the undoubted truth and certainty of the History recorded by* Moses, *as any can be given concerning any thing which we yield the firmest assent unto.* Here it must be considered, that we proceed in a way of rational evidence to prove the truth of the thing in hand, as to which, if in the judgment of impartial persons the arguments produced be strong enough to convince an unbyassed mind; It is not material, whether every wrangling *Atheist* will sit down contented with them. For usually persons of that *inclination* rather than *judgment*, are more *resolved* against *light*, than *inquisitive after* it, and rather seek to stop the *chinks* at which any light might come in, than open the *windows* for the free and chearful entertainment of it. It will certainly be sufficient to make it appear, that no man can deny the truth of that part of *Scripture* which we are now speaking of, without offering *manifest violence* to his own *faculties*, and making it appear to the world, that he is one wholly forsaken of his own reason: which will be satisfactorily done, if we can clear these things: *First, that it was morally impossible* Moses *should be ignorant of the things he undertook to write*

Sect. 1. *Hyp.* 3.

write of, and ſo be deceived himſelf. Secondly, That it was utterly impoſſible he ſhould have any deſign in deceiving others in reporting it. Thirdly, That it is certain from all rational evidence, that he hath not deceived the world, but that his Hiſtory is undoubtedly true. First, *That it was morally impoſſible* Moſes *ſhould be deceived himſelf, or be ignorant of the things which he writ of.* *Two* things are requiſite to prevent a Man's being deceived himſelf. *Firſt, That he be a perſon of more than ordinary judgment, wiſdom, and knowledge. Secondly, That he have ſufficient information concerning the things he undertakes to write of.* If either of theſe two be wanting, it is poſſible for a man of integrity to be deceived; for an *honeſt heart* hath not always an *Urim* and *Thummim* upon it; nor is fidelity always furniſhed with the acuteſt intellectuals. The *ſimplicity* of the *Dove* is as liable to be *deceived* its ſelf as the *ſubtilty* of the *Serpent* is to *deceive* others; but where the wiſdom of the Serpent is, to prevent being deceived, and the Doves innocency in not deceiving others, there are all the qualifications can be deſired in any one who undertakes only to tell the Truth. Firſt, *Then that* Moſes *was a perſon of a great underſtanding, and ſufficiently qualified to put a difference between truth and falſhood*, will appear, firſt, *from the ingenuity of his Education*; Secondly, *from the ripeneſs of his judgment, and greatneſs of his experience when he penned theſe things.*

Firſt, We begin with his *Education.* And here we require at preſent no further aſſent to be given to what is reported concerning *Moſes* in *Scripture*, than what we give to *Plutarch's lives*, or any other relations concerning the actions of perſons who lived in former Ages. *Two* things then we find *recorded* in *Scripture* concerning *Moſes his Education*; *that he was brought up in the Court of Ægypt*, and *that he was skilled in all the learning of the Ægyptians*; and theſe *two* will abundantly prove the ingenuity of his Education, *viz.* That he was a perſon both converſant in civil Affairs, and acquainted with the abſtruſer parts of all the *Ægyptian* wiſdom.

Heb. 11. 25. Act 7. 22.

Sect. 2. And I confeſs there is nothing to me which doth advance ſo much the repute of the ancient *Ægyptian Learning*, as that the *Spirit* of *God* in Scripture ſhould take ſo much notice of it, as to ſet forth a perſon (otherwiſe renowned for greater accompliſhments) by his *skill* in this. For if it be below the

wiſdom

wisdom of any ordinary person, to set forth a person by that which in its self is no matter of *commendation*; how much less can we imagine it of that infinite wisdom which inspired *Stephen* in that *Apology* which he makes for himself against the *Libertines*, who charged him with *contempt* of *Moses* and the *Law*? And therefore certainly this was some very *observable* thing, which was brought in as a singular commendation of *Moses*, by that person whose design was to make it appear how high an esteem he had of him. And hence it appears that *Learning* is not only in its self a great *accomplishment* of *humane nature*, but that it ought to be looked upon with *veneration*, even in those who have excellencies of a higher nature to commend them. If a *Pearl* retains its *excellency* when it lies upon a *dunghill*, it can certainly *lose* nothing of its *lustre* by being set in a *Crown of gold*; if Learning be commendable in an *Ægyptian*, it is no less in *Moses*, where it is *enamelled* with more noble perfections, than of it self it can reach unto. All the question is, Whether the ancient learning of the *Ægyptians* was such as might be supposed to improve the reason and understanding of men to such an height, as thereby to make them more capable of putting a difference between truth and falshood? Whether it were such an overflowing *Nilus* as would *enrich* the *understandings* of all those who were in a capacity to receive its streams? The truth is, there want not grounds of suspicion, that the old *Ægyptian Learning* was not of that *elevation* which the present distance of our Age makes us apt to think it was. And a learned man hath in a set discourse endeavoured to shew the great *defects* that there were in it: Neither can it, I think, be denyed, but according to the reports we have now concerning it, some *parts* of their *Learning* were *frivolous*, others *obscure*, a great deal *Magical*, and the rest *short* of that *improvement*, which the accession of the parts and industry of after Ages gave unto it. But yet it is again as evident, that some parts of learning were *invented* by the *Ægyptians*, others much *improved*, and that the *Greeks* did at first *set up* with the *stock* they *borrowed* out of *Ægypt*, and that learning chiefly flourished there, when there was (I had almost said) an *Ægyptian darkness* of *Ignorance* overspreading the face of *Greece* as well as other Nations.

Conringius de Hermet. Medic. c. 10, 11, 12.

Sect. 3. Which will appear by these considerations, *the great antiquity of their repute for Learning, the great advantages they had for promoting it, and the parts of Learning most in use among them.* This though it may seem a *digression* here, will yet tend to promote our design, by shewing thereby how qualified and accomplished *Moses* was to deliver to the world an history of ancient times. If we believe *Macrobius*, there was no people in the world could *vye* for *Learning* with the *Ægyptians*, who makes *Ægypt* in one place, *the Mother of all Arts*, and in another, the *Ægyptians omnium Philosophiæ disciplinarum parentes, the Fathers of the Philosophick Sciences*; he derives elsewhere the *original* of all *Astronomy* from them, *quos constat primos omnium cælum metiri, & scrutari ausos*: though it be more *probable* that the *Nativity* even of *Astronomy* it self was first *calculated* by the *Chaldeans*, from whom it was conveyed to the *Ægyptians*. He likewise *appropriates* all divine knowledge to them, where he saith they were *Solii rerum divinarum conscii*, and after calls *Ægypt*, *divinarum omnium disciplinarum compotem*. It is sufficiently notorious what great repute the *Ægyptian Learning* hath been in, with some in our latter times, in that our *Chymists* look upon it as the greatest honour to their profession, that they think they can claim kindred of the *old Ægyptian Learning*, and derive the *pedigree* of their *Chymistry* from the old *Ægyptian Hermes*. But that vain pretence is sufficiently refuted by the fore-mentioned learned man *Conringius*, in his Tract on this subject, *de Hermetica Medicina*. *Franciscus Patricius* professeth himself so great an admirer of the old *Ægyptian Learning*, that he thought it would be no bad exchange, if the *Peripatetick Philosophy* were *extruded*, and the old *Ægyptian* received instead of it. But the world is now grown wiser, than to receive his *Hermes Trismegistus* for the Author of the old *Ægyptian Philosophy*, the credit of his Author being for ever blasted, and the doctrine contained in the Books under his name, manifested to be a meer *Cento*, a confused mixture of the *Christian, Platonick*, and *Ægyptian* doctrine together. So that we could hardly maintain the justness of the repute of the ancient *Ægyptian Learning* from any thing now extant of it; but yet we see no reason to question it, especially since it is so honourably spoken of in *Sacred Writ*, and seems in it to have been

Saturn. l. 1. cap. 15. in Somn. Scip. l. 1. c. 19.

cap. 21.

Saturn. l. 1. cap. 14. l. 7. c. 13.

been made the *standard* and *measure* of humane *wisdom*. For which we have this observable testimony, that when the *wisdom* of *Solomon* is spoken of with the greatest advantage and commendation, it is set forth with this character, *that it exceeded the wisdom of all the children of the East Country, and all the wisdom of* Ægypt. Whence it is most natural and easie to argue, That certainly their learning must be accounted the greatest at that time in the world; or else it could not have been inferred, that *Solomon* was *wiser* than *all men*, because his *wisdom* excelled *theirs*, unless we suppose their *wisdom* to have been the *greatest* in that age of the world, when the *wisdom* of the *Græcians* (although in that time *Homer* is supposed to flourish) was not thought worthy the taking notice of. We see from hence then, as from an irrefragable testimony, that the *wisdom* of the *Ægyptians* anciently was no *trivial Pedantry*, nor meer *superstitious* and *Magical rites*, but that there was something in it *solid* and *substantial*, or it had not been worth *triumphing* over by the *wisdom* of *Solomon*: It being true of that, what *Lipsius* saith of the *Roman Empire*, *Quicquid dignum vinci videbatur, vicit; cætera non tam non potuit quam contempsit*; it was an argument of some great worth, that it was over-topped and conquered by it.

1 King. 4. 29. 30, 31.

De Magnitud. Rom. l. 1. c. 3.

Thus we see how just the repute of the ancient *Ægyptian Learning* is from *Testimony*, and we shall find as great reason for it, when we consider the great *advantages* the *Ægyptians* had for promoting of *Learning* among them. *Two* ways men come to knowledge, either by *tradition* from others, or by *observation* of their own; what the *Ægyptians* had the *first* way, will be spoken to afterwards; we now consider the latter of these. All *knowledge* arising from *observation*, must be either of those *Sciences* which immediately conduce to the benefit of mens lives, or such whose end is to improve mens *rational faculties* in the knowledge of things. The former *necessity* will put men upon the finding out, the latter require *secessum & otia*, *freedom* from other imployments, a *mind addicted* to them, and *industry* in the study of them, and a *care* to *preserve* their inventions in them. The study of *Geometry* among the *Ægyptians*, owed its *original* to *necessity*; for the river *Nile* being swelled with the showers falling in *Æthiopia*, and thence annually over-flowing the Country of *Ægypt*, and by its vio-

Sect. 4.

Vid Arist. Metaph. 1. l. c. 1.

lence overturning all the marks they had to distinguish their lands, made it necessary for them upon every *abatement* of the flood to survey their Lands, to find out every one his own by the quantity of the ground upon the survey. The necessity of which put them upon a more diligent enquiry into that study, that thereby they might attain to some exactness in that, which was to be of such necessary, constant and perpetual use. Thence we find the invention of *Geometry* particularly attributed by *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, *Strabo* and others, to the *Ægyptians*. This skill of theirs they after improved into a greater benefit, *viz.* the conveying the water of *Nile* into those places where it had not overflown to so great a height, as to give them hopes of an ensuing plenty; which they did by the artificial cutting of several *Chanels* for that end, wherein, saith *Strabo*, the *Ægyptians Art and Industry out-went Nature it self.* By this likewise they observed the height of the over-flowing of the river, whereby they knew what harvest to expect the following year; which they did by a Well near *Memphis* (from the use of it called Νειλομέτριον) upon the walls of which were the marks of several cubits, which they observe and publish it to all, that they might provide themselves accordingly. We see what grounds there are, even from profit and advantage, to make us believe that the *Ægyptians* were skilled in *Geometry*, and the knowledge relating thereto.

Herod. l. 2. Diod. l. 1. Strab. l. 17. Cæl. Rhodi. l. 18. c. 34.

Sect. 5. And for the promoting of all other knowledge whose end is *Contemplation*, the very *constitution* of their *Commonwealth* did much conduce thereto: For thereby it was provided that there should always be a sufficient number of persons freed from all other *Employments*, who might devote themselves to a sedulous enquiry into the Natures of things. Such were the *Ægyptian Priests*, who by the peculiar nature of the *Ægyptian Superstitions*, were freed from that burdensome service of *sacrificing beasts*, which the Priests of other Nations were continually employed about, and so they enjoyed not only an *easie* but a very *honourable employment*; for they were the persons of the greatest honour, esteem, and authority among the *Ægyptians*, of which rank, as far as I can find, all were accounted, who were not *Souldiers*, *Husbandmen*, or *Artificers*. For *Strabo* mentions no *Nobility* at all in *Ægypt* distinct

Geogr. l. 17.

distinct from the *Priests*; for he divides the whole *Commonwealth* into *Souldiers*, *Husbandmen* and *Priests*. And telling us that *the other two were employed about matters of war, and the King's revenues in peace*, he adds, οἱ δ' ἱερεῖς καὶ φιλοσοφίαν ἤσκουν καὶ ἀστρονομίαν, ὁμιληταί τε τῷ βασιλέως ἦσαν, *The Priests minded the study of Philosophy and Astronomy, and conversed most with their Kings*: And after, speaking of their *Kings* being studied in their arts as well as others of the *Priests*, he adds, μεθ' ὧν τῶν αὐτῶν πλείων ὁ βίος, *with whom they spent most of their lives.* Agreeable to this, *Plutarch* tells us, that the *Kings* themselves were often *Priests*; and adds, out of *Hecataeus*, that the *Kings used to drink wine by measure*, ἱερεῖς ὄντες, *because they were Priests*; for, as he saith, the *Kings of Ægypt* were always chosen, either out of the rank of *Priests* or *Souldiers*, τὰ μὲν δι' ἀνδρείαν, τὰ δὲ διὰ σοφίαν τιμὰς ἀξίωμα καὶ τιμὴν ἔχοντα· *those two orders being of the greatest honour, the one for valour, and the other for wisdom*; and if the King were chosen out of the Souldiers, he was presently entred among the *Priests*, to learn their *mystical Sciences*. *Diodorus* indeed seems to reckon some great persons after the *Priests*, and distinct from the *Souldiery*; but if he means by these any other than some of the *chief* of the other two *professions*, I must say, as *Casaubon* doth in another case of *Diodorus*, *Sane* Strabonis *auctoritas multis siculis apud me prævalet.* Diodorus *his testimony is not to be weighed with* Strabo's. From hence we may understand the reason why that *Potipherah*, whose daughter *Joseph* married, is called כֹּהֵן, which some render the *Priest*, others the *Prince of On*; but these two we see are very consistent, their *Priests* being their great *Princes*; and *Heliopolis*, or *On*, of which *Potipherah* was *Prince* or *Priest*, being the chief *Seat* and *University* of the *Priests* of *Ægypt*. Now it is evident from *Clemens Alexandrinus*, that the *Ægyptians* did not communicate their *mysteries* promiscuously to all, but only to such as were in *succession* to the *Crown*, or else to those of the *Priests* and their *Children*, who were most apt and fit for them, both by their *diet*, *instruction*, and *family*. For this was unalterably observed among them, that there was a *continued succession* of a *profession* in their *several families*, both of *Priests*, *Souldiers*, and *Husbandmen*, whereby they kept their several orders without any mixture or confusion, which

De Isid. & Osir.

Lib. 1.

Not. in Strab. l. 17.

Gen. 41. 45.

Strom. l. 5.

is

Herod. l. 1. *Diod. l.*1. *c.*71. is confeſſed both by *Herodotus* and *Diodorus:* So that by this conſtitution *Learning* was among them confined to the *Prieſts*, which highly advanceth the probability of that *tradition*, preſerved among the *Ægyptians* concerning *Moſes* (which likewiſe ſtrongly proves our preſent deſign) *viz. Manetho*'s Records, as *Joſephus* tells us, that *Moſes* was one of the *Prieſts* at *Heliopolis*, and that his name among them was *Oſarſiphus*, who changing his name, was called *Moſes*; and in the time of *Amenophis* conducted the *leprous* people out of *Ægypt* (ſo the *Ægyptians* out of their hatred of the *Iſraelites* call them.) And *Chæremon*, another *Ægyptian Prieſt* in the ſame Author, calls *Moſes* a *Scribe*, and *Joſeph* (by whom probably he means *Joſhua*) a *ſacred Scribe*, and ſaith, that the *Ægyptian* name of *Moſes* was *Tiſithen*, and of *Joſeph*, *Poteſeph*. Now this tradition did in all probability ariſe from the repute of *Moſes* his *learning* and *wiſdom*; which being among them proper to their *Prieſts*, they thence aſcribed that name to him, although probably he might come to the *knowledge* of all their *myſteries*, from the *relation* he had to *Pharaoh*'s daughter.

L. 1. *c. App.*

Sect. 6. We come now to conſider the *parts* of the *Ægyptian learning*, in which the *Scripture* tells us *Moſes was killed:* This by *Philo Judæus* is branched into *Arithmetick*, *Geometry*, *Muſick*, and *Hieroglyphical Philoſophy:* But *Sixtus Senenſis* more comprehenſively from *Diodorus*, *Diogenes Laertius*, and others, divides it into *four parts*, *Mathematical*, *Natural*, *Divine* and *Moral*. Their skill in the *Mathematical* parts of Learning hath been partly ſhewed already, and might be more largely from that skill in them, which the *Græcians* gained from the *Ægyptians*, as both *Iamblicus* and *Porphyrie* ſpeak of *Pythagoras*, that he gained his skill in *Geometry* chiefly from the *Ægyptians:* For theſe, as *Porphyrie* ſaith, of a long time had been very ſtudious of *Geometry*, as the *Phœnicians* of *Arithmetick*, and the *Chaldæans* of *Aſtronomy*. But *Iamblichus* (and I think deſervedly) takes notice of the τὸ δυσπεριόδευτον, the *difficult acceſs* of the *Ægyptian Prieſts*, eſpecially as to acquaintance with their myſteries; and ſo *Strabo* calls them, μυστικὸς καὶ δυσμεταδότους, *ſuch who concealed their learning under many ſymbols, and were not eaſily drawn to unfold it.* And yet we might think the two and twenty years time which *Pythagoras* is thought to have ſpent among them, had been enough to

De vita Moſis.

Bibliothec. l. 2. *p.* 39.

Iambl. de vit. Pyth. l. 1. 29. *De vit. Pyth. p.* 182.

Geogr. l. 17.

to have insinuated himself into their utmost acquaintance, and to have drawn from them the knowledge of their greatest mysteries; but yet we have no great reason to think he did, if we believe the story in *Diogenes Laertius* of his sacrificing an *Hecatomb* for the finding out of that *demonstration*, which is now contained in the 47. *proposition* of the first of *Euclide*. Yet this did not abate the *Græcians* esteem of the *Ægyptians Mathematical Learning*; for in *Plato*'s time, *Eudoxus Cnidius* went into *Ægypt* on purpose to acquire it there; and *Democritus* his boast, that none of the *Arsepedonaptæ* in *Ægypt* (so their Priests were called, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* and *Eusebius* tell us, who relate the story) exceeded him in the *Mathematicks*, by which it may be at least inferred, that they were then in greatest esteem for them. Their great skill in *Astronomy* is attested by *Diodorus*, *Strabo*, *Herodotus*, and others, and by their finding out the *course* of the *year* by the motion of the *Sun*, which was the invention of the *Heliopolitan Priests*. How much they valued *Geography*, appears from *Clemens* his description of the ἱερογραμματεύς, or *sacred Scribe* in the *solemn procession*; for he was required to be skilled in *Hieroglyphicks*, *Cosmography*, *Geography*, *the motions of the Planets*, *the Chorography of Ægypt*, *and description of the Nile*. *Eustathius* in his Notes on *Dionysius*, attributes the invention of *Geographical Tables* to *Sesostris*, who caused the Lands he had conquered to be described in Tables, and so communicated to the *Ægyptians*, and from them to others. Their skill in *natural Philosophy* could not be very great, because of their *Magick* and *Superstition*, whereby they were hindred from all experiments in those natural things which they attributed a *Divinity* to; but they seem to have been more exact and curious in *natural history*; for, any *prodigies*, or any thing that was *anomalous* in nature, they did, saith *Strabo*, φιλοπραγμονέστερον ἀναφέρειν εἰς τὰ ἱερογράμματα, *with a great deal of curiosity insert it in their sacred records*, and *Herodotus* adds, *that more things of that nature are observed by them than by any other Nation*; which, saith he, they not only diligently preserve, but frequently compare together, and from a *similitude* of *prodigies* gather a *similitude* of *events*. But that which gained the *Ægyptians* the greatest repute abroad, seems to have been their early *skill* in *Physick*, which is so much spoken of by *Homer*, *Plato*,

Clem. Strom. l. 1. *Euseb. Præpar. l. 10. c. 2.*

Diod. l. 1. c. 49, 50. *Strab. l. 17.*

Herod. l. 2.

Strom. l. 6. p. 631. ed. Par.

Plato, *Herodotus*, *Plutarch*, *Diogenes Laertius*, and others, that it were impertinent troubling a Reader's patience with the proof of that which is so generally confessed. A great evidence of the antiquity of this study among them is (if *Manetho* may be so far credited) that *Athothis*, the *second King* of the *first Dynasty* of the *Thinites*, was a *Physician* himself, and writ some Books of *Anatomy*; and the *second King* of the *third Dynasty* of the *Memphites*, was, for his skill in *Physick*, honoured among them by the name of *Æsculapius*. *Pliny* affirms it to have been the custom of their *Kings* to cause dead bodies to be *dissected*, to find out the nature of *diseases*; and elsewhere tells us, that the original of *Physick* among them was from the relations of those who by any remedy were cured of any disease, which for a *memorial* to posterity were recorded in their *Temples*. Their *hieroglyphical* and *mystical Learning* hath made the greatest noise in the world, and hath the least of *substance* in it; which whoever will not be convinced of without perusal of *Kircher's Oedipus Ægyptiacus*, will at last find it fully done to his hand by the successless endeavours of that otherwise learned man. I cannot think any rational man could think that study worth his pains, which at the highest can amount but to a conjecture; and when it is come to that with a great deal of pains, it is nothing but some ordinary and trivial observation. As in that famous *Hieroglyphick* of *Diospolis*, so much spoken of by the Ancients, where was a *Child* to express *coming into the world*, an *old man* for *going out of it*, an *Hawk* for *God*, an *Hippopotamus* for *hatred*, and a *Crocodile* for *impudence*, and all to express this venerable *Apophthegm*, *O ye that come into the world, and that go out of it, God hates impudence.* And therefore certainly this kind of *Learning* deserves the highest form among the *difficiles Nugæ*; and all these *Hieroglyphicks* put together will make but one good one, and that should be for *Labour lost*.

Nat. hist. l.19. c.5. l.29. c.1.

Sect. 7. There is yet one *part* of *Learning* more among them, which the *Ægyptians* are esteemed for, which is the *Political* and civil part of it, which may better be called *wisdom* than most of the fore-going; two things speak much the *wisdom* of a Nation, *good Laws*, and a *prudent management of them*: their *Laws* are highly commended by *Strabo* and *Diodorus*; and it is none of the least commendations of them, that *Solon* and

and *Lycurgus* borrowed so many of their constitutions from them; and for the prudent management of their government, as the continuance of their *state* so long in peace and quietness, is an invincible demonstration of it; so the report given of them in *Scripture* adds a further *testimony* to it; for therein the King of *Ægypt* is called the *Son of the Wise*, as well as *the Son of ancient Kings*; and *his Counsellors* are called *wise Counsellors of* Pharaoh, and *the wise men*; whereby a more than ordinary prudence and policy must be understood. Can we now imagine such a person as *Moses* was, bred up in all the *ingenuous literature* of *Ægypt*, conversant among their *wisest persons* in *Pharaoh*'s *Court*, having thereby all advantages to improve himself, and to understand the utmost of all that they knew, should not be able to pass a judgment between a mere *pretence* and *imposture*, and *real* and *important Truths*? Can we think that one who had *interest* in so great a *Court*, all *advantages* of *raising himself* therein, should willingly forsake all *the pleasures* and *delights* at *present*, all his *hopes* and *advantages*, for the *future*, were he not fully persuaded of the certain and undoubted truth of all those things which are recorded in his books? Is it possible a man of *ordinary wisdom* should venture himself upon so hazardous, unlikely and dangerous employment, as that was *Moses* undertook, which could have no *probability* of *success*, but only upon the *belief* that that *God* who appeared unto him, was greater than all the *Gods* of *Ægypt*, and could carry on his own design by his own power, maugre all the opposition which the *Princes* of the *world* could make against it? And what possible ground can we have to think that such a person who did verily believe the truth of what *God* revealed unto him, should dare to write any otherwise than as it was revealed unto him? If there had been any thing repugnant to *common reason* in the *history* of the *Creation*, the *fall of man*, the *universal deluge*, the *propagation of the world by the sons of* Noah, the *history of the Patriarchs*, had not *Moses rational faculties* as well as we? nay, had he them not far better improved than any of *ours* are? and was not he then able to judge what was *suitable* to *reason*, and what not? and can we think he would then deliver any thing *inconsistent* with *reason* or *undoubted tradition* then, when the *Ægyptian Priests* might so readily and plainly have *triumphed* over him, by dis- Isa. 19. 11, 12.

covering the falſhood of what he wrote? Thus we ſee that *Moſes* was as highly qualified as any of the acuteſt *Heathen Philoſophers* could be, for *diſcerning truth* from *falſhood*; nay, in all probability he far excelled the moſt renowned of the *Græcian Philoſophers* in that very kind of learning wherewith they made ſo great noiſe in the world, which was originally *Ægyptian*, as is evident in the whole *ſeries* of the *Græcian Philoſophers*, who went age after age to *Ægypt*, to get ſome *ſcraps* of that learning there, which *Moſes* could not have but *full meals* of, becauſe of his *high place*, *great intereſt*, and *power* in *Ægypt*. And muſt thoſe *hungry Philoſophers* then become the only *Maſters* of our *reaſon*, and their *dictates* be received as the *ſenſe* and *voice* of *nature*, which they either received from *uncertain tradition*, or elſe delivered in *oppoſition* to it, that they might be more taken notice of in the world? Muſt an αὐτὸς ἔφα be confronted with, *Thus ſaith the Lord?* and a few pitifull *ſymbols* vye authority with *divine commands?* and *Ex nihilo nihil fit* be ſooner believed than, *In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth?* What irrefragable evidence of reaſon is that ſo confident a *preſumption* built upon, when it can ſignifie nothing without this *hypotheſis*, That there is nothing but *matter* in the *world?* and let this firſt be proved, and we will never ſtick to grant the other. I may confidently ſay, the great *gullery* of the *world* hath been, taking *philoſophical dictates* for the *ſtandard of reaſon*, and *unproved hypotheſes* for certain *foundations* for our *diſcourſe* to rely upon. And the ſeeking to reconcile the *myſteries* of our faith to *theſe*, hath been that which hath almoſt *deſtroyed* it, and turned our Religion into a mere *philoſophical ſpeculation*. But of this elſewhere. We ſee then that inſiſting merely on the *accompliſhment* and *rational perfections* of the perſons who ſpeak, we have more reaſon to yield credit to *Moſes* in his *hiſtory*, than to any *Philoſophers* in their *ſpeculations*.

Sect. 8. And that which in the next place ſpeaks *Moſes* to be a perſon of *wiſdom*, and *judgment*, and ability to find out truth, was his *age* and *experience* when he delivered theſe things to the world. He vented no *crude* and *indigeſted conceptions*, no *ſudden* and *temerarious fancies*, the uſual *iſſues* of *teeming* and *juvenile wits*; he lived long enough to have experience to try, and judgment to diſtinguiſh a mere outſide and varniſh, from what was

was solid and substantial. We cannot then have the least ground of suspicion, that *Moses* was any ways unfit to discern truth from falshood, and therefore was capable of judging the one from the other.

But though persons be never so highly accomplisht for *parts*, *learning*, and *experience*, yet if they want *due information* of the certainty of the things they deliver, they may be still *deceived themselves*; and if they preserve it for posterity, be guilty of *deceiving others*. Let us now therefore see whether *Moses* had not as great *advantages* for understanding the truth of his *History*, as he had *judgment* to *discern* it. And concerning all those things contained in the *four last books* of his, to his own death, it was *impossible* any should have *greater* than himself, writing nothing but what he was *pars magna* himself of, what he *saw*, and *heard*, and *did*; and can any testimony be desired greater than his whose actions they were, or who was present at the doing of them, and that not in any *private way*; but in the most *publick capacity*? For although private persons may be present at great actions, yet they may be guilty of mis-representing them, for want of understanding all circumstances *precedent*, and *subsequent*, or for want of understanding the *designs* of the chief *instruments* of action: but when the *person* himself, who was the *chief* in all, shall undertake to write an exact History of it, what evidence can be desired more certain than that is, that there could be no defect as to information concerning what was done? The only scruple then that can be made, must be concerning the *passages* of former times which *Moses* relates. And here I doubt not but to make it appear, that insisting only on all that can be desired in a *bare Historian* (setting aside *Divine revelation*) he had as *true* and *certain information* of the History of those former ages, as any one can have of things at that distance from themselves; and that is, by a *certain uninterrupted tradition* of them, which will appear more clear and evident in that Nation of which *Moses* was, than in any other Nation in the world: And that on these *two accounts*: first, *The undoubted lineal descent from Father to Son in the Jewish Nation.* Secondly, *Their interest lying so much in the preserving this tradition entire.*

First, *That there was a certain unmixed lineal descent from* Sect. 9.

Father to Son in the Jewiſh Nation: the great cauſe of moſt of the *confuſion* in the *tradition* of other Nations, was the frequent *mixing* of ſeveral *families* one with another; now that *God* might as it were on purpoſe ſatisfie the world of the *Iſraelites capacity* to preſerve the *tradition entire*, he prohibited their *mixture* by marriages with the people of other Nations and families. So that in *Moſes* his time it was a very eaſie matter to run up their lineal deſcent as far as the *flood*, nay, up to *Adam*; for *Adam* converſed ſometime with *Lamech*, *Noah*'s Father; for *Lamech* was born *A. M.* 874. *Adam* died 930. ſo that 56 years, according to that computation, were *Adam* and *Lamech* co-temporary. Can we then think *Noah* ignorant of the ancient tradition of the world when his *Father* was ſo long *co-ævus* with *Adam*; and *Mathuſelah* his *Grandfather*, who was born *A. M.* 687. died not till *A. M.* 1656. according to our moſt learned *Primate* of *Armagh*, *i. e.* was 600 years co-temporary with *Noah*. *Sem* his Son was probably living in ſome part of *Jacob*'s time, or *Iſaac*'s at leaſt; and how eaſily and uninterruptedly might the general tradition of the ancient Hiſtory be continued thence to the time of *Moſes*, when the number of families agreeing in this tradition was increaſed, and withall *incorporated* by a common *ligament* of *Religion*? I demand then, where can we ſuppoſe any ignorance or cutting off this *general tradition* in ſo continued a *ſucceſſion* as here was? Can we imagine that the *Grand-children* of *Jacob* could be ignorant of their own *pedigree*, and whence they came into *Ægypt*? can we think a thing ſo late and ſo remarkable as the account of their coming *thither*, ſhould be forgotten, which was attended with ſo many memorable circumſtances, eſpecially the ſelling and advancement of *Joſeph*, whoſe memory it was impoſſible ſhould be obliterated in ſo ſhort a time? Could *Jacob* be ignorant of the *Country* whence his *Grand-father Abraham* came? eſpecially when he lived ſo long in it himſelf, and married into that branch of the *family* that was remaining there, when he had ſerved his *Uncle Laban*? Could *Abraham*, when he was co-temporary with *Sem*, be ignorant of the truth of the *flood*, when *Sem*, from whom he derived himſelf, was one of the perſons who eſcaped it in the *Ark*? Could *Sem* be ignorant of the *actions* before the *flood*, when *Adam*, the *firſt man*, lived ſo near the time of *Noah*? and, Could *Noah* then be ignorant

rant of the *Creation* and the *Fall of man?* Thus we see it almost *impossible*, that any age among them then could be ignorant of the passages of the *precedent*, which they were so few *Generations* removed from, that they could with ease derive themselves from the *first man*. What then can we say? that any of these had a design of *deceiving* their posterity, and so corrupted the tradition? but besides, that it could be hardly *possible* at that time, when there were so many remaining *testimonies* of former *times*; what *end* can we imagine that any Parents should have in thus *deceiving* their *Children* or what advantage should come to them by such a deceit? Nay, I shall now manifest in the *second place*, *that the whole interest of their children lay in preserving this tradition certain and entire.* For their *hopes* of *possessing Canaan* and *title* to it, depended upon the *promise* made to *Abraham* 400 years before; which would not only keep *awake* their *sense* of *Divine Providence*, but would make them careful during their bondage to preserve their *Genealogies*, because all the *right* they could plead to their *possessions* in *Canaan*, was from their being of *Abraham's seed*. And besides this, on purpose to be a *memorial* to them of *passages* between *God* and *Abraham*, they had in their flesh a *badge* of *circumcision*, which would serve to call to mind those *transactions* which had been between *God* and their *fore-fathers*. These things then do fully *demonstrate*, that insisting onely on *rational evidence*, the *Israelites* were the most certain *conservators* of the ancient History of the world; and can we then think, that *Moses* who was the Ruler among them, should not fully understand those things which every *Israelite* could scarce be ignorant of, and might correct the mistakes of *Moses* in his History, if he had been guilty of any such? These things I suppose have made the *first proposition evident*, *That it was morally impossible* Moses *should be deceived himself, or be ignorant of the things which he reports to others both because he had abilities sufficient to discover truth from falshood, and sufficient information of the passages of former times.*

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Moſes his fidelity and integrity proved.

Moſes *conſidered as an Hiſtorian, and as a Law-giver; his fidelity in both proved; clear evidences that he had no intent to deceive in his Hiſtory, freedom from private intereſt, impartiality in his relations, plainneſs and perſpicuity of ſtile. As a Law-giver, he came armed with Divine Authority, which being the main thing, is fixed on to be fully proved from his actions and writings. The power of miracles the great evidence of Divine revelation. Two grand queſtions propounded. In what caſes miracles may be expected, and how known to be true. No neceſſity of a conſtant power of miracles in a Church: Two caſes alone wherein they may be expected. When any thing comes as a Law from God, and when a Divine Law is to be repealed. The neceſſity of miracles in thoſe caſes as an evidence of Divine revelation aſſerted. Objections anſwered. No uſe of miracles when the doctrine is ſettled and owned by miracles in the firſt revelation. No need of miracles in reformation of a Church.*

Sect. 1. THE ſecond *propoſition* contains the proof of *Moſes* his *fidelity, that he was as far from having any intent to deceive others, as he was being deceived himſelf.* Two ways *Moſes* muſt be conſidered, as an *Hiſtorian*, and as a *Lawgiver*; the only *inducement* for him to deceive as an *Hiſtorian*, muſt be ſome particular *intereſt* which muſt draw him aſide from an impartial delivery of the truth; as a *Law-giver* he might *deceive*, if he *pretended Divine revelation* for thoſe *Laws* which were only the iſſues of his own brain, that they might be received with a greater *veneration* among the people, as *Numa Pompilius* and others did. Now if we prove that *Moſes* had no *intereſt* to deceive in his *Hiſtory*, and had all *rational evidence* of *Divine revelation* in his *Laws*, we ſhall abundantly evince the undoubted *fidelity* of *Moſes* in every thing *recorded* by him. We begin then with his *fidelity* as an *Hiſtorian*; and it being contrary to the *common intereſt* of the world to *deceive* and *be deceived*, we have no reaſon to entertain any ſuſpicions

ons of the *veracity* of any perſon where we cannot diſcern ſome *peculiar intereſt* that might have a ſtronger *biaſs* upon him than the *common intereſt* of the world. For it is otherwiſe in *morals* than in *naturals*; for in *naturals*, we ſee that every thing will leave its *proper intereſt* to preſerve the *common intereſt* of *nature*; but in *morals*, there is nothing more common than *deſerting* the *common intereſt* of mankind, to ſet up a *peculiar intereſt* againſt it: It being the trueſt deſcription of a *Politician*, that he is one who makes himſelf the *centre*, and the *whole world* his *circumference*; that he regards not how much the whole world is abuſed, if any advantage doth accrue to himſelf by it. Where we ſee it then the deſign of any perſon to *advance himſelf* or his poſterity, or to ſet up the *credit* of the *Nation* whoſe *Hiſtory* he writes, we may have juſt cauſe to ſuſpect his *partiality*, becauſe we then find a ſufficient inducement for ſuch a one to leave the common *road* of truth, and to fall into the *paths* of deceit. But we have not the leaſt ground to ſuſpect any ſuch *partiality* in the *Hiſtory* of *Moſes*; for nothing is more clear than that he was free from the *ambitious deſign* of *advancing himſelf* and his *poſterity*, who notwithſtanding the great *honour* he enjoyed himſelf, was content to leave his *poſterity* in the meaneſt ſort of *attendance* upon the *Tabernacle*. And as little have we ground to think he intended to *flatter* that *Nation*, which he ſo lively deſcribes, that one would think he had rather a deſign to ſet forth the *frowardneſs*, *unbelief*, *unthankfulneſs*, and *diſobedience* of a *Nation* towards a *Gracious God*, than any ways to *inhance* their *reputation* in the world, or to ingratiate himſelf with them by writing this Hiſtory of them Nay, and he ſets forth ſo exactly the *leſſer failings* and *groſſer enormities* of all the *Anceſtours* of this Nation whoſe acts he *records*, that any impartial Reader will ſoon acquit him of a deſign of *flattery*, when after he hath *recorded* thoſe *faults*, he ſeeks not to *extenuate* them, or bring any *excuſe* or pretence to *palliate* them. So that any obſerving reader may eaſily take notice, that he was carried on by a higher deſign than the *common people* of *Hiſtorians* are; and that his drift and ſcope was to *exalt* the *goodneſs and favour of God*, towards a *rebellious* and *obſtinate people*. Of which there can be no greater nor more lively *demonſtration*, than the *Hiſtory* of all the *tranſactions* of the

the *Jewish Nation*, from their coming forth of *Ægypt* to their utter *ruine* and *desolation*. And *Moses* tells them as
Deut. 7. 7, 8. from *God* himself, *it was neither for their number, nor their goodness, that God set his Love upon them, but he loved them, because he loved them*; *i. e.* no other account was to be given of his gracious dealing with them, but the *freeness* of his own *bounty*, and the *exuberancy* of his *goodness* towards them. Nay, have we not cause to admire the *ingenuity* as well as *veracity* of this excellent *personage*, who not only lays so notorious a blot upon the stock of his own Family *Levi*, recording so punctually the inhumanity and cruelty of him, and *Simeon* in their dealings with the *Sechemites*; but likewise in-
Gen. 34. 25.
Gen. 49. 5, 6, 7. serts that curse which was left upon their *memory* for it, by their own *Father* at his decease! And that he might not leave the least *suspicion* of *partiality* behind him, he hath not done as the *statuary* did, (who engraved his own name so artificially in the statue of *Jupiter*, that one should continue as long as the other (but what the other intended for the praise of his skill, *Moses* hath done for his *ingenuity*, that he hath so *interwoven* the *History* of his own *failings* and *disobedience* with those of the Nation, that his *spots* are like to continue as long as the whole *web* of his *History* is like to do. Had it been the least part of his design to have his memory preserved with a *superstitious veneration* among the *Jews*, how easie had it been for him to have left out any thing that might in the least *entrench* upon his reputation? but we find him very *secure* and *careless* in that particular; nay, on the other side, very *studious* and *industrious* in *depressing* the honour and *deserts* of men and *advancing* the *power* and *goodness* of *God*. And all this he doth, not in an affected *strain* of *Rhethorick*, whose proper work is *impetrare fidem mendacio*, and as *Tully* somewhere confesseth, *to make things seem otherwise than they are*, but with that *innate simplicity* and *plainness*, and yet withal with that *Imperatoria brevitas*, that *Majesty* and *Authority*, that it is thereby evident he sought not to *court acceptance*, but to *demand belief*: Nor had any such pitiful design of pleasing his Readers with some *affected phrases*, but thought that *Truth* it self had *presence* enough with it, to *command* the *submission* of our *understandings* to it.

Especially

Sect. 2.

Especially when all these were delivered by such a one who came sufficiently armed with all *motives* of *credibility* and *inducements* to *assent*, by that *evidence* which he gave, that he was no *pretender* to *divine revelation*, but was *really* imployed as a *peculiar instrument* of *State* under the *God* and *Ruler* of *the whole world*. Which if it be made clear, than all our further doubts must presently cease, and all impertinent disputes be silenced, when the supream *Majesty* appears *impowering* any person to *dictate* to the world the *Laws* they must be governed by. For if any thing be repugnant to our *rational faculties*, *that is*, that *God* should *dictate* any thing but what is most *certainly true*, or that the *Governour* of the *world* should *prescribe* any *Laws*, but such as were most *just* and *reasonable*. If we suppose a *God*, we cannot question *veracity* to be one of his chiefest Attributes, and that it is *impossible* the *God of truth* should imploy any, to *reveal* any thing as from him, but what was *undoubtedly true*. So that it were an argument of the most gross and unreasonable *incredulity*, to *distrust* the *certainty* of any thing which comes to us with sufficient *evidence* of *divine revelation*, because thereby we shew our *distrust* of the *veracity* of *God himself*. All that we can desire then, is only *reasonable satisfaction* concerning the evidence of *Divine revelation* in the person whose words we are to credit, and this our *Gracious God* hath been so far from denying men, that he hath given all *rational evidence* of the truth of it. For it implying no *incongruity* at all, to any *notions* of *God* or *our selves*, that *God* should, when it pleases him, single out some *instrument* to manifest his will to the world; our enquiry then leads us to *those things* which may be proper *notes* and *characters* of such a person who is employed on so high an *Embassy*. And those are chiefly these two, *if his actions be such as could not flow from the power of meer natural causes*; and *if the things he reveals be such as could not proceed from any created understanding*. First then, *for his actions*, these striking most upon our *outward senses*, when they are any thing *extraordinary*, do *transmit* along with the *impressions* of them to the *understanding*, an *high opinion* of the *person* that does them: Whereas the mere *height* of knowledge, or *profoundness* of things discovered, can have no such present *power* and *influence* upon any, but such as are of more *raised* and *inquisitive minds*. And the world

is generally more apt to ſuſpect its ſelf deceived with *words*, than it can be with *actions*; and hence *Miracles*, or the doing of things above the reach of nature, hath been always embraced as the greateſt teſtimony of *Divine authority* and *revelation*. For which there is this evident reaſon, That the courſe of nature being ſetled by divine power, and every thing acting there by the force of that power it received at firſt, it ſeems *impoſſible* that any thing ſhould really alter the *ſeries* of things, without the ſame power which at firſt produced them. This then we take for granted, *that where-ever ſuch a power appears, there is a certain evidence of a Divine preſence going along with ſuch a perſon who enjoys it.* And this is that which is moſt evident in the *actions of Moſes*, both as to the *Miracles* he wrought both in *Ægypt* and the *Wilderneſs*, and his *miraculous deliverance* of the *Iſraelites* out of *Ægypt*, this latter being as much above the reach of any merely *civil power*, as the other above *natural*.

Sect. 3. We therefore come to the *rational evidence* of that *divine authority* whereby *Moſes* acted, which may be gathered from that *divine power* which appeared in *his actions*; which being a matter of ſo great weight and importance (it being one of the main *baſes* whereon the *evidence* of *divine revelation*, as to *us*, doth ſtand) and withal of ſo great *difficulty* and *obſcurity*, (cauſed through the preferring ſome parties in Religion, above the common intereſt of it) it will require more care and diligence to ſearch what *influence the power of Miracles* hath upon the *proving* the *Divine Commiſſion* of thoſe who *do* them. Whether they are ſuch undoubted *credentials*, that where-ever they are produced, we are preſently to receive the *perſons* who bring them, as extraordinary *Embaſſadors* from heaven, employed on ſome peculiar *meſſage* to the *ſons of men?* For the full ſtating of this *important queſtion*, *two* things muſt be cleared; Firſt, *In what caſes miracles may be expected as credentials to confirm an immediate commiſſion from Heaven?* Secondly, *What rational evidences do attend thoſe miracles, to aſſure us they are ſuch as they pretend to be?*

1. *Firſt*, For *the caſes wherein theſe miracles are to be expected as inducements to, or confirmations of our faith, concerning the Divine imployment of any perſons in the world.* And here I lay down this as a certain Foundation, *That a power of miracles is not conſtantly*

constantly and perpetually necessary in all those who manage the affairs of Heaven here on earth, or that act in the name of God in the world. When the *doctrine* of *faith* is once *setled* in *sacred records*, and the *divine revelation* of that *doctrine* sufficiently *attested*, by a *power* of *miracles* in the *revealers* of it, What imaginable necessity or pretext can there be contrived for a power of miracles, especially among such as already own the *Divine revelation* of the *Scriptures?* To make then a power of working miracles to be constantly resident in the Church of God, as one of the necessary *notes* and *characters* of it, is to put *God* upon that necessity which common nature is freed from, *viz.* of multiplying things without sufficient cause to be given for them; and to leave mens faith at a stand, when *God* hath given sufficient testimony for it to rely upon. It is a thing too common and easie to be observed, that some persons out of their eagerness to uphold the interest of their own party, have been fain to establish it upon such grounds, which when they are sufficiently searched to the bottom, do apparently undermine the common and sure Foundations whereon the belief of our common *Christianity* doth mainly stand. It were easie to make a large discourse on this subject, whereby we may rip open the wounds that *Christianity* hath received, through the contentions of the several parties of it; but this *imputation* cannot with so much reason be fastned on any party, as that which is nailed to a pretended *infallible chair*; for which we need no other instance, than this before us. For while the leaders of that party make a *power* of *miracles* to be a necessary *note* of the *true Church*, they unavoidably run men upon this dangerous precipice, not to believe any thing as a matter of faith, where they find not sufficient *miracles* to convince them that is the *true Church* which propounds it to them. Which necessarily follows from their acknowledged principles; for it being impossible, according to them, to believe any thing with a *divine faith*, but what is propounded by the *Church* as an *infallible* guide; and it being impossible to know which is this *infallible* guide, but by the *notes* and *characters* of it, and one of those *notes*, being a *power* of *miracles*, I cannot find out my *guide* but by this *power*; and this *power* must be *present* in the *Church*, (for nothing of former ages concerning faith, as the *Miracles* of *Christ*,

his *reſurrection*, &c. is to be believed, but on the Church's account) and therefore where men do not find ſufficient *conviction* from *preſent miracles*, to believe the *Church* to be an infallible guide, they muſt throw off all faith concerning the *Goſpel*; for as good never a whit, as never the better. And therefore it is no wonder *Atheiſm* ſhould be ſo *thriving* a plant in *Italy*; nay under, if not within the walls of *Rome* it ſelf, where inquiſitive perſons do daily ſee the *jugglings* and *impoſtures* of *Prieſts* in their pretended miracles, and from thence are brought to look upon Religion its ſelf as a mere impoſture, and to think no *Pope* ſo infallible as he that ſaid, *Quantum nobis profuit hæc de Chriſto fabula*? Such horrid conſequences do men drive others, if not bring themſelves, to, when they employ their parts and induſtry rather to uphold a *corrupt intereſt*, than to promote the belief of the acknowledged principles of Chriſtian faith. But as long as we aſſert no *neceſſity* of ſuch a *power* of *miracles* to be the *note* of any true Church, nor any ſuch *neceſſity* of an *infallible guide*, but that the *miracles* wrought by *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*, were ſufficient *evidences* of a *divine ſpirit* in them; and that the *Scriptures* were *recorded* by them to be an *infallible* rule of faith, here we have more clear reaſon as to the primary *motives* and *grounds* of faith, and withal the *infallible veracity* of *God* in the Scriptures, as the laſt *reſolution* of *faith*. And while we aſſert ſuch an *infallible rule* of *faith*, delivered to us by ſuch an unanimous conſent from the firſt delivery of it, and then ſo fully *atteſted* by ſuch *uncontrollable miracles*, we cannot in the leaſt underſtand to what end a power of miracles ſhould now ſerve in the *Church*, eſpecially among thoſe who all believe the Scriptures to be the *Word of God*. Indeed before the great *harveſt* of *Converts* in the *primitive times* were brought in, both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and the *Church* fully ſetled in receiving the *Canon* of the *Scriptures* univerſally, we find *God* did continue this power among them; but after the *Books* of the *New Teſtament* were generally embraced as the rule of faith among *Chriſtians*, we find them ſo far from pretending to any ſuch power, that they reject the pretenders to it, ſuch as the *Donatiſts* were, and plead upon the ſame accounts as we do now againſt the *neceſſity* of it. We ſee then no reaſon in the world for *miracles* to be continued where the doctrine of faith

is

is settled, as being confirmed by *miracles* in the first Preachers of it.

There are only these *two* cases then, wherein *miracles* may justly and with reason be expected. First, *When any person comes as by an extraordinary commission from God to the world, either to deliver some peculiar message, or to doe some more than ordinary service.* Secondly, *When something that hath been before established by Divine Law, is to be repealed, and some other way of worship established instead of it.* First, *When any comes upon an extraordinary message to the world, in the name of, and by commission from God*, then it is but reason to require some more than ordinary *evidence* of such *authority*. Because of the main importance of the duty of giving credit to such a person, and the great sin of being guilty of rejecting that divine authority which appears in him. And in this case we cannot think that *God* would require it as a *duty* to believe, where he doth not give sufficient *arguments* for *faith*, nor that he will punish persons for such a fault, which an *invincible ignorance* was the cause of. Indeed *God* doth not use to *necessitate* faith, as to the act of it, but he doth so clearly *propound* the *object* of it, with all arguments inducing to it, as may sufficiently justifie a *Believer*'s *choice* in point of *reason* and *prudence*, and may leave all Unbelievers without excuse. I cannot see what account a man can give to himself of his faith, much less what *Apology* he can make to others for it, unless he be sufficiently convinced in point of the *highest reason*, that it was his *duty* to *believe*; and in order to that *conviction*, there must be some clear *evidence* given, That what is spoken hath the *impress* of *Divine authority* upon it. Now what convictions there can be to any sober mind concerning *Divine authority* in any person without such a *power* of *miracles* going along with him, when he is to deliver some *new doctrine* to the world to be believed, I confess I cannot understand. For although I doubt not but wherever *God* doth *reveal* any thing to any person immediately, he gives *demonstrable evidence* to the inward *senses* of the *soul*, that it comes from himself; yet this *inward sense* can be no *ground* to another person to *believe* his *doctrine divine*, because no man can be a *competent judge* of the *actings* of another's *senses*; and it is impossible to another person to distinguish the *actings* of the *divine Spirit* from strong *impressions* of *fancy* by the *force* and

Sect. 4.

Object. and *energy* of them. If it be ſaid, *That we are bound to believe thoſe, who ſay they are fully ſatisfied of their Divine Commiſſion.*

Anſw. 1. I anſwer, *First*, this will expoſe us to all *deluſions* imaginable; for if we are bound to believe them *becauſe* they ſay ſo, we are bound to believe *all* which ſay ſo; and none are more confident pretenders to this than the greateſt deceivers, as the experience of our age will ſufficiently witneſs. 2. *Secondly*, Men muſt neceſſarily be bound to believe *contradictions*; for nothing is more ordinary, than for ſuch confident *pretenders* to a *Divine Spirit*, to *contradict* one another, and it may be, the ſame perſon in a little time *contradict himſelf:* and muſt we ſtill be bound to believe all they ſay? If ſo, no *Philoſophers* would be ſo much in requeſt, as thoſe *Ariſtotle* diſputes againſt in his *Metaphyſicks*, who thought a thing might be, and not be, 3. at the ſame time. *Thirdly*, The *ground* of *faith* at laſt will be but a mere *humane teſtimony*, as far as the perſon who is to believe is capable of judging of it. For the *Queſtion* being, Whether the perſon I am to believe hath *divine authority* for what he ſaith, What ground can I have to believe that he hath ſo? Muſt I take his *bare affirmation* for it? If ſo, then a mere humane *teſtimony* muſt be the ground of *divine faith*, and that which it is laſt reſolved into; if it be ſaid, *That I am to believe the divine authority by which he ſpeaks, when he ſpeaks in the name of God:* I anſwer, the *queſtion* will again return, how I ſhall know he ſpeaks this from *divine authority?* and ſo there muſt be a progreſs *in infinitum*, or founding *divine faith* on a mere humane teſtimony, if I am to believe *divine revelation* merely on the account of the perſon's affirmation who pretends unto it. For in this caſe it holds good, *non apparentis & non exiſtentis eadem eſt ratio*; if he be divinely inſpired, and there be no ground inducing me to believe that he is ſo, I ſhall be excuſed, if I believe him not, if my wilfulneſs and lazineſs be not the cauſe of my unbelief.

Sect. 5. If it be ſaid, *That God will ſatisfie the minds of good men concerning the truth of divine revelation.* I grant it to be wonderfully true; but all the queſtion is *de modo*, how God will ſatisfie them? whether merely by inſpiration of his own ſpirit in them, aſſuring them that it is *God* that ſpeaks in ſuch perſons; or by giving them *rational evidence*, convincing them of ſufficient grounds to believe it. If we aſſert the former way, we run

run into these inconveniences: *First*, We make as *immediate* a *revelation* in all those who believe, as in those who are to *reveal divine truths* to us; for there is a new revelation of an *object* immediately to the *mind*; viz. *that such a person is inspired of God*; and so is not after the common way of the *Spirit's illumination* in *Believers*, which is by *inlightning* the *faculty*, without the *proposition* of any new *object*, as it is in the *work* of *Grace*: So that according to this opinion, there must be *immediate inspiration* as to that *act* of *faith*, whereby we believe any one to have been *divinely inspired*, and consequently to that whereby we believe *the Scriptures to be the Word of God*. *Secondly*, Doth not this make the fairest plea for men's *unbelief*? For, I demand, Is it the duty of those who want that *immediate illumination* to *believe* or no? If it be not their duty, *unbelief* can be no *sin* to them; if it be a *duty*, it must be made known to be a *duty*; and how can that be made known to them to be a *duty*, when they want the only and necessary means of *instruction* in order to it? Will *God* condemn them for that, which it was *impossible* they should have, unless *God* gave it them? And how can they be left *inexcusable*, who want so much as *rational inducements* to faith; for of these I now speak, and not of *efficacious persuasions* of the mind, when there are *rational arguments* for *faith propounded*. But, *lastly*, I suppose the case will be cleared, when we take notice what course *God* hath always taken to give all *rational satisfaction* to the *minds* of men, concerning the persons whom he hath imployed in either of the forementioned cases. *First*, *For those who have been imployed upon some special message and service for God*, he hath sent them forth sufficiently provided with manifestations of the *Divine power* whereby they acted; as is most clear and evident in the present case of *Moses*, *Exodus* 4. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. where *Moses* puts the case to *God*, which we are now debating of. Supposing, saith he, that I should go to the *Israelites* and tell them, *God* had appeared to me, and sent me to deliver them, and they should say, *God* had not appeared unto me; how should I satisfie them? *God* doth not reject this *objection* of *Moses* as savouring of *unbelief*, but presently shews him how he should satisfie them, by causing a *miracle* before his face, *turning his Rod into a Serpent*; and *God* gives this as the reason of it, *vers.* 5. *That they may believe that the Lord*

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3.

Lord God of their Fathers, the God of Abraham, *the God of* Isaac, *the God of* Jacob, *hath appeared unto thee.* It seems *God* himself thought this would be the most *pregnant* evidence of *God*'s appearing to him, if he wrought *miracles* before their faces. Nay, lest they should think one single miracle was not sufficient, *God* in the immediate following verses adjoyns two more, which he should doe in order to their satisfaction; and further, *vers.* 21. *God* gave him a charge to doe all those wonders before *Pharaoh*, which he had put into his hand: And accordingly we find *Pharaoh* presently demanding a *miracle* of *Moses*, *Exodus*, 7. 9. which accordingly *Moses* did in his presence, though he might suppose *Pharaoh*'s demand not to proceed from desire of satisfaction, but from some hopes that for want of it, he might have rendred his credit suspected among the *Israelites*.

Sect. 6. Indeed after *God* had delivered his people, and had setled them in a way of serving him according to the *Laws* delivered by *Moses*, which he had confirmed by unquestionable *miracles* among them, we find a *caution* laid in by *Moses* himself, against those which should pretend signs and wonders to draw them off from the Religion established by the *Law* of *Moses*. Deut. 13. 1, 2, 3. And so likewise under the *Gospel*, after that was established by the *unparallell'd miracles* of our *Saviour* and the *Apostles*, we find frequent *cautions* against being deceived by those who came with pretences of doing great *miracles*. But this is so far from infringing the *credibility* of such a *Testimony* which is confirmed by *miracles*, that it yields a strong confirmation to the truth of what I now assert. For the *doctrine* is supposed to be already *established* by *miracles*, according to which we are to judge of the *spirits* of such *pretenders*. Now it stands to the greatest reason, that when a *Religion* is once *established* by uncontrolled *miracles*, we should not hearken to every whiffling *Conjurer* that will pretend to doe great feats, to draw us off from the truth established. In which case, the surest way to discover the *imposture* is, to compare his pretended *miracles* with those *true* and *real* ones which were done by *Moses* and *Christ*; and the ground of it is, because every person is no competent *judge* of the truth of a *miracle*; for the *Devil*, by his power and subtilty, may easily deceive all such as will be led by the nose by him, in expectation of some wonders to be done

done by him. And therefore as long as we have no ground to question the *certainty* of those *miracles* which were wrought by *Christ* or *Moses*, I am bound to adhere to the *doctrine* established by those miracles, and to make them my rule of judging all persons who shall pretend to work miracles: Because, 1. I do not know how far *God* may give men over to be *deceived by lying wonders, who will not receive the truth in the love of it*; *i. e.* those that think not the *Christian Religion* sufficiently confirmed by the *miracles* wrought at the first *promulgation* of it. *God* in *justice* may permit the *Devil* to go further than otherwise he could, and leave such persons to their own credulity, to believe every imposture and illusion of their senses for true miracles. 2. That *doctrine* which was *confirmed* by undoubted *miracles*, hath *assured* us of the coming of *lying wonders*, whereby many should be deceived. Now this part of the doctrine of the *Gospel* is as certainly true as any of the rest; for it was confirmed by the same *miracles* that the other was; and besides that, the very coming of such *miracles* is an evidence of the truth of it, it falling out so exactly according to what was foretold so many hundred years since. Now if this *doctrine* be true, then am I certain the intent of these *miracles* is to *deceive*, and that those are deceived who hearken to them; and what reason then have I to believe them? 3. To what *end* do these miracles *serve?* Are they to confirm the *truths* contained in *Scripture?* But what need they any confirmation now, when we are assured by the *miracles* wrought by *Christ* and his *Apostles*, that the doctrine by them preached came from *God?* and so hath been received upon the credit of those miracles ever since. Were these truths sufficiently proved to be from *God* before or no? If *not*, then all former ages have believed without sufficient *ground* for faith; if they were, then what ground can there be to confirm us in them now? Certainly *God*, who never doth any thing but for very great purposes, will never alter the *course* of nature, merely for satisfaction of men's *vain curiosities*.

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But it may be it will be said, *It was something not fully revealed in Scripture which is thus confirmed by miracles*: but where hath the *Scripture* told us, that any thing not fully *revealed* therein, should be afterwards *confirmed?* Was the *Scripture* an *infallible rule* of *faith* while this was *wanting* in it? Did *Christ*

Sect. 7.

and his *Apoſtles* diſcharge their places, when they left ſomething *unrevealed* to us? Was this a *duty* before theſe miracles, or no? if it *was*, what need *miracles* to confirm it? if *not*, *Chriſt* hath not told us all *neceſſary conditions* of *ſalvation*. For whatever is required as a *duty*, is ſuch, as the neglect of it runs men upon damnation. *Laſtly*, men's *faith* will be left at *continual uncertainties*; for we know not according to this *principle*, when we have all that is neceſſary to be *believed*, or doe all that is neceſſary to be *practiſed* in order to ſalvation. For if *God* may ſtill make new *articles of faith*, or conſtitute new *duties* by freſh *miracles*, I muſt go and enquire what *miracles* are wrought in every *place*, to ſee that I miſs nothing that may be *neceſſary* for me, in order to my happineſs in another world.

If men pretend to deliver any doctrine *contrary* to the *Scripture*; then it is not only *neceſſary* that they *confirm* it by *miracles*, but they muſt manifeſt the *falſity* of thoſe *miracles* on which that *doctrine* is believed, or elſe they muſt uſe another miracle to prove that *God* will ſet his *ſeal* to *confirm* both *parts* of a *contradiction* to be true. Which being the *hardeſt task* of all, had need be proved by very *ſufficient* and *undoubted miracles*, ſuch as may be able to make us believe *thoſe are miracles*, and *are not*, at the ſame time, and ſo the *ſtrength* of the *argument* is utterly deſtroyed by the *medium* produced to prove it by.

By this diſcourſe theſe *two things* are clear; *Firſt*, *That no pretences of miracles are to be hearkned to, when the doctrine we are to believe is already eſtabliſhed by them, if thoſe miracles tend in the leaſt to the derogation of the truth of what was eſtabliſhed by thoſe former miracles. Secondly*, *That when the full doctrine we are to believe is eſtabliſhed by miracles, there is no neceſſity at all of new miracles, for confirmation of any of the truths therein delivered.* And therefore it is a moſt *unreaſonable* thing to demand *miracles* of thoſe to prove the *truth* of the doctrine they deliver, who do *firſt* ſolemnly *profeſs* to deliver nothing but what was *confirmed* by *miracles* in the firſt delivery of it, and is contained in the *Scriptures* of the *Old and New Teſtament*, and *ſecondly* do not pretend to any *immediate Commiſſion* from *heaven*, but do nothing but what in their conſciences they think every *true Chriſtian* is *bound* to *doe*; much more all *Magiſtrates* and *Miniſters* who believe the *truth* of what they profeſs,

profess, which is in their places to reform all *errours* and *abuses* which are crept into the *doctrine* or *practice* of *Christianity*, through the corruption of men or times. And therefore it is a most unjust and unreasonable demand of the *Papists*, when they require *miracles* from our *first reformers*, to prove the *truth* of their *doctrine* with. Had they pretended to have come with an *immediate commission* from *heaven* to have added to the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel*, there had been some plea for such a demand; but it was quite otherwise with them: Their only design was, *to whip the buyers and sellers out of the Temple*, to purge the *Church* from its *abuses*: And although that by *Jerome* was thought to be one of our *Saviour's* greatest *miracles*, yet *this* by us is conceived to be no other than the *duty* of all *Magistrates*, *Ministers*, and *private Christians*; *these* by their *prayers*, *Ministers* by their *doctrine*, and *Magistrates* by their just *authority*.

CHAP. IV.

The fidelity of the Prophets succeeding *Moses*.

An order of Prophets to succeed Moses, *by God's own appointment in the Law of* Moses. *The Schools of the Prophets, the original and institution of them. The Cities of the Levites. The occasion of their first institution. The places of the Schools of the Prophets, and the tendency of the institution there to a prophetical office. Of the Musick used in the Schools of the Prophets. The Roman Assamenta, and the Greek Hymns in their solemn worship. The two sorts of Prophets among the* Jews, *Leiger and extraordinary. Ordinary Prophets taken out of the Schools, proved by* Amos *and* Saul.

BUT although now under the *Gospel* (the revelation of God's Will being *compleated* by *Christ* and his *Apostles*) we have no reason either to expect *new Revelations*, or *new Miracles* for confirming the *old*; yet under the *Law*, *God* training up his people by degrees till the *coming of Christ*, there was a necessity of a new supply of *Divine Messengers* (called *Prophets*) *Sect.* 1.

Prophets) to prepare the people, and make way for the coming of *Christ*. As to whom these two things are considerable.

First, *Those Prophets whose work was to inform the people of their duties, or to reprove them for their sins, or to prepare them for the coming of the Messias* (which were their chief tasks) *had no need to confirm the truth of their doctrine or commission from heaven by the working of miracles among them.* And that on these two accounts.

First, *Because God did not consummate the revelation of his mind and will to the* Jews *by the Ministry of* Moses, *but appointed a succession of Prophets to be among them, to make known his mind unto them.* Now, in this case, when the *prophetical office* was established among them, what *necessity* was there that every one that came to them upon an *errand* from *God*, should prove his *testimony* to be true by miracles, when in the discharge of his office he delivered nothing *dissonant* from the *Law of Moses?* It is one argument *God* intended a *succession of Prophets*, when he laid down such rules in his Law for the judging of them, and to know whether they were truly inspired or no, *Deut.* 18. 21, 22. And in that same place *God* doth promise a *succession of Prophets*, Deut. 18. 15, 18. *A Prophet will the Lord God raise up unto thee like unto me; to him shall ye hearken.* Which words, though in their *full* and *compleat sence* they do relate to *Christ* (who is the great *Prophet* of the *Church*) yet who ever *attends* to the *full scope* of the words, will easily perceive that the immediate sence of them doth relate to an *order* of *Prophets*, which should succeed *Moses* among the *Jews*; between whom and *Moses* there would be a great *similitude* as to their *Birth*, *Calling*, and *Doctrine*, though not a *just equality*, which is excluded, *Deut.* 34. 10, 11. and the chief reason why it is said there that the other Prophets fell so much short of *Moses* is, in regard of the *signs and wonders* which he wrought, as is there largely expressed. Nor may it seem strange, that by a *Prophet* should be understood an *order* or *succession of Prophets*, when it is acknowledged by most *Protestants*, that by ὁ Ἀντίχριστος, *the Antichrist*, is understood a *rank* and *succession* of several *persons* in the same name and function: And that it is to be understood in those words concerning a *succession* of *Prophets*, will appear by the *occasion* of their being brought in; for ver. 14. *God prohibits* them

to

to *hearken* after the manner of their Neighbour-nations, to *observers of times and diviners*, and then brings in the following words, *v.* 15. as to the reason of that *prohibition*, that *God would raise up a Prophet among themselves like unto Moses, and to him should they hearken.* Now let any rational man judge whether it were so probable an argument to keep them from hearkning to Diviners of other Nations, that there should a Prophet arise 2000 years after like unto *Moses*, as that he would raise up a *continued succession of Prophets* among themselves, to whom they should hearken. Thus *Origen* in his excellent Books against *Celsus*, shews the necessity of the *Prophetical office* among the *Jews* from hence; *for*, saith he, *it being written in their Law that the Gentiles hearkened unto Oracles and Divinations; but God would not suffer it to be so among them, it presently follows, A Prophet will the Lord God raise up in the midst of thee*, &c. *Therefore*, saith he, *when the Nations round about them had their Oracles, and several ways of divination, all which were strictly prohibited among the Jews, if the Jews had no way of foreknowing things to come, it had been almost impossible, considering the great curiosity of humane nature, to have kept them from despising the Law of Moses, or apostatizing to the heathen Oracles, or setting up something like them among themselves.* Which interpretation of his seems to have a great deal of *reason*, not only from the *coherence* of the words here, but from the *Analogy* of many other *precepts* of the *Law* of *Moses*, which it is most certain have a respect to the customs of the *Idolatrous Nations* round about them. Another reason why it is most probable, that by this is understood *a succession of Prophets*, is the charge which follows against *false Prophets*, and the *rules* to *discover* them, ver. 20, 21, 22. which had not been so *pertinent* and *coherent* if the *opposition* did not lie between the *order of true Prophets* among the *Jews*, and the *false Prophets*, which should rise up in the midst of them. And that which yet further justifies this *interpretation*, is, that there is no other place in the whole *Pentateuch* which doth expressly speak of *a succession of Prophets*, if this be not understood of it; and is it any ways probable a matter of so great moment and consequence should be wholly pretermitted? Especially when we find it so exactly performed in the succeeding Ages of the *Jewish Commonwealth*; their immediate

V. Arabic. vers. & Calv. in loc. P. Fagium, P. Martyr. Loc. Com. Class. 1. *cap.* 3. *Sect.* 12.

C. Celsum l. 1. Deut. 18. 14.

mediate Rulers like *Dictators* at *Rome*, after *Moſes*'s death, being moſt raiſed up by *immediate incitation* and *impulſe* from *God*, and many of them *inſpired* with a *ſpirit of Prophecy*. How ſhould the *Jews* have expected theſe, or obeyed them when they appeared, had not *God* foretold it to them, and provided them for it by the *Law* of *Moſes*?

Sect. 2. Neither did theſe *Prophets* ariſe ſingly among them, like *blazing Stars*, one in an Age, to *portend future events*, but whole *Conſtellations* of them ſometimes appeared together; yea, ſo many ſmaller Prophets were ſometimes united together, as made up a perfect *Galaxy*, when they were entred into *Societies*, and became *Schools of the Prophets*; for ſuch we frequently read of in Scripture. The *original* and *inſtitution* of which may caſt a *further light* into our preſent deſign, and ſhew us the little reaſon the *Jews* could have to expect miracles from them to confirm their doctrine, who were brought up in the knowledge of their *Law*, and were called out from their ſeveral Societies into the prophetical office by the *immediate incitation* of *God* himſelf. Which being ſo commonly known among them, there needed no ſuch extraordinary proofs to manifeſt the *Divine authority* by which they were employed. *Two* things then we ſhall endeavour to clear; Firſt, *the original and inſtitution of theſe Schools of the Prophets*; and Secondly, *That it was the ordinary courſe for the Prophets by employment to be taken forth of theſe ſocieties wherein they were educated.* Firſt, *for the original and inſtitution of theſe Schools of the Prophets.* The firſt *Seminaries*, or *places* of inſtitution among the *Jews*, were the *Cities* of the *Levites*, which were diſperſed up and down in the ſeveral *Tribes* of *Iſrael*; *God* thereby turning that into a bleſſing, which was pronounced as a *curſe* upon *Levi* by his Father *Jacob*,

Gen. 49. 7. viz. *that he ſhould be divided in Jacob, and ſcattered in Iſrael.* But though the fulfilling of that Prophecy might be the primary ground of that ſcattering, yet it is evident that *God* aimed at ſome further good in it, both in reference to the *Levites* and the *Iſraelites*. *Lyra* undertakes to aſſign four reaſons of this diſtribution of the *Cities* of the *Levites* among the

Joſh. 21. Tribes. (1) Becauſe if they had lived but in one Tribe, the *worſhip* of *God* would have ſeemed to have been confined to that Tribe. (2.) Becauſe they would have been a *burden* to that

Tribe

Tribe they had their habitations in (3.) From the *equity* of being maintained by all who served for all. (4.) Because it was their office to *teach* the *people*, and therefore it was necessary they should live among them. These reasons are most of them *opposed* by *Abulensis*, but defended by others. The *last* is that which most insist on, it being the peculiar office of the *Levites* to teach the people; so 2 *Chron.* 35. 4. *And said unto the Levites, qui erudiebant omnem Israelem*, as *Vatablus* renders it, *who taught all Israel*; and *Masius* insists on that as the great reason of their dispersion, to be ready to teach the *Law* among the *Israelites*. But yet all those who are agreed that *teaching* the *Law* was the *duty* of the *Levites*, are not yet agreed of the *manner* of that *teaching*; for there being *two* parts of their *Law*, the one *ceremonial* and *judicial*, and the other *moral* and *spiritual*, the question is, whether of these two did belong to, or was performed by the *Priests* and *Levites*. There are many who understand all that Office of *teaching* which belonged to the *Priests* and *Levites*, to be merely concerning the *ceremonial* part of the *Law*, i. e. deciding all *cases* of *controversie* which should arise concerning their ceremonial worship, which in *Levit.* 10. 10. is called *putting a difference between holy and unholy, and between clean and unclean.* But it seems somewhat strange that *God* should take so great care about the *shell* and *outside* of his *worship*, and none at all for the *moral* and *spiritual* part of it, especially when he had set apart a *whole Tribe* merely for his own service, and freed them from all other employments, that they might have a greater liberty to attend upon the things relating to his service; especially when it is mentioned as the duty of the *Priests* and *Levites to teach all the statutes which the Lord had spoken to them by the hand of Moses*, and that *they shall teach* Jacob *thy statutes, and Israel thy Law.* Which notwithstanding what *Abarbinel* and others say, must certainly comprehend as well the *moral* as the *ceremonial* part of *Moses* his *Law.* And the *Priests lips are said to preserve knowledge: and God saith they should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.* Do these things import no more than mere *deciding* the *cases* of the *ceremonial Law?* But whatever *God's* intention in the *institution* of the *Levites* was, we find not much in Scripture of what they did for the promoting the *moral*

Abul. in Josh. 21. *c.* 7, & 8. *V. Sherlog. Antiq. Hebr. l.* 2. *c.* 3. *f.* 4. *Masius in Josh. c.* 14.

Lev. 10. 10. Deut. 33. 10.

Mal. 2. 7.

moral and *ſpiritual part* of divine worſhip; but it is no news to hear that *Societies* inſtituted for good and pious ends, ſhould degenerate from the firſt intention of the Founders of them; and thus it is probable it was with the *Levites*, who finding the moſt of their benefit and advantage to come in by the *ceremonial caſes*, might grow more *negligent* of the *moral part* of *divine ſervice*, which brought no ſecular emolument to them.

Sect. 3. And thence we read not of theſe *Schools of the Prophets*, which were *Societies* in order to *ſpiritual inſtruction*, till about the time of *Samuel*; and many think him to have been the firſt *Authour* of them. For it is evident, that about his time the *Prieſthood* was grown to a great *degeneracy*, and men thereby eſtranged from the worſhip of God, ſo that there
1 Sam. 3. 1. ſeemed almoſt a *neceſſity* then of reſtoring ſome *Societies*, who might have a ſpecial eye to the ſpiritual part of *God's worſhip* and *ſervice*. The *occaſion* of the *inſtitution* of them, ſeems to have been from the *reſort* which the people had to the *high places* for *ſacrificing*, during the captivity or uncertain abode of the *Ark of God*, after the *deſolation* of *Shiloh*: now the people reſorting to theſe places to perform their Solemnities,
1 Sam. 9. 12, 13. it was ſo ordered, that a *company* of *Prophets* ſhould be there reſident to *bleſs the ſacrifices*, and inſtruct the people. Two of theſe places with theſe Societies in them we find mentioned in the time of *Samuel*. The *firſt* mentioned, 1 *Sam.* 10. 5, 10. which cannot be the ſame with *Ramah*, although the *Syriack* and *Arabick verſions* ſo render it. For *Samuel* had his own *reſidence* in *Ramah* whither *Saul* went to him, 1 *Sam.* 9. 18, 19. but in this Chapter we find *Samuel ſending Saul* on a journey from him beyond *Bethel* and the plain of *Tabor*, and there tells him he ſhould meet with the *company of Prophets upon the hill of God*, ver. 5. Some think it was called the *Hill of God*, becauſe of its *height*, as *the Cedars of God* and *the mountains of God for the higheſt*; ſo *Tirinus* underſtands it, but *Menochius* far more probably, *quia in ea erat cœtus & veluti ſchola prophetarum.* The *Chaldee Paraphraſt* renders it, *ad*
1 Sam. 7. 1. *collem in quo arca Domini. R. Solomon* makes this *hill* to be *Kirjah-jearim*, and therefore called *the hill of God*, becauſe the *Ark* was there in the *houſe of* Abinadab *in the hill.* But *Lyra* thinks he hath proved, that before this time the *Ark* was removed

moved from *Kirjath-jearim* to *Mizpah*; but *Abulensis* more probably conceives it was never removed *thither*, and withal thinks *this hill of God* to be no other than *Gibeah* of *Benjamin*, where *Saul* inhabited; and thence the wonder was the greater, to see him *prophesie* among those who had known his former life and education. The other place is *Naioth* in *Ramah*, where was a *high place* whither the people came to sacrifice; this *Ramah* seems to have been the place of *Samuel*'s nativity, called *Ramathaim Sophim*, which the *Syriack version* renders *collis specularum* (some who would be ready to improve every thing for their purpose, would think it was so called in allusion to the imployment of the young Students there. So *Heinsius* conceives שרה צפים to be understood, *Numb.* 23. 14. the place of *watchmen*, from which word saith he, without doubt, the *Greeks* derived their σκοποὶ, who were wont in such *high places* to observe the *course and motions of the heavens*; But to pass by such frivolous conjectures.) It seems a great deal more probable, that this *Ramah* which the *Septuagint* by a light mutation of the initial letters calls ἀρμαθαὶμ, was the same with *Arimathæa*, the Town of *Joseph* mentioned in the *Gospel*. But the place where *the school of the Prophets* was, seems to have been, with greatest conveniency, for a place of *education*, at some distance from the *Town*. *Vatablus* conceives it was built in the *fields* of *Ramah*, and the word *Naioth*, saith *Pet. Martyr*, properly signifies *pastures*, and some *remote places*, *quæ fere sunt studiis aptissima*. The *Chaldee Paraphrast* renders *Naioth* by בית אולבנא *a Colledge or School of prophetical education*: over this *Colledge Samuel* himself was *President*, as most understand that place, 1 *Sam.* 19. 20. *And when they saw the company of Prophets prophesing, and* Samuel *standing as appointed over them*; *Jonathan* renders it, *& Samuelem stantem docentem super eos.* To which we may well apply the words of *Philo*, speaking of the *Jewish manner* of instruction, τῶ μὲν ἡγεμόνι ὑφηγεμένω καὶ διδάσκοντι, τὰ δ' ἐπιδιδόντων εἰς καλοκαγαθίαν καὶ βελτιωμάτων πάντ' ἔθη καὶ ἤθη καὶ βίον. *The President going before and teaching, the rest increasing in goodness, and improving in life and manners.*

V. Jun. in l.

1 Sam. 19. 18, 20.

1 Sam. 1. 1.

Exercit. Sacræ. l. 1. *c.* 2.

Philo. de v. Mos. l. 3.

Sect. 4.

Neither can we think so *good* and useful an *institution*, should presently *degenerate* or be turned into another channel; and therefore some conceive that the most noted *Prophets* to the time of *David* were the *Presidents* of these *Colledges*; such

as beſides *Samuel* were *Helcana*, *Gad*, *Nathan*, *Heman*, and *Jeduthun*; and that they ſelected out the *choiceſt* and moſt hopeful of the *young Levites*, and here educated them, together with the *Nazarites* which came out of other tribes. And it ſeems very probable, that in all the moſt noted *high places* whither they went to ſacrifice, there were ſuch *Schools* erected after the *firſt inſtitution* of them. Thence we read of ſuch *multitudes* of the *Prophets* together, in the time of *Ahab*, 1 Kings 18. 4. for when *Jezabel* cut off the Prophets of the Lord, *Obadiah took an hundred and hid them in caves*; certainly their number was very great, when an *hundred* might be ſaved without miſſing. The chief places where they reſided, ſeem to have been *Bethel*, 2 Kings 2. 3. and *Jericho*, which was a *Large Colledge*; for therein we read of *fifty ſons of the Prophets ſtanding together out of their number*, 2 Kings 2. 5, 7, 15. and *Gilgal*, which had been *a place of Religion* from the firſt entrance into *Canaan*; there we find *the ſons of the Prophets ſitting before Eliſha*, 2 Kings 4. 38. It ſeems moſt probable that the purity of *God's* worſhip among the *ten tribes* after the *defection* in the *time* of *Jeroboam* was preſerved by the *Prophets* in their *ſeveral Schools and places of habitation*; which hath ſufficient *foundation* in that place, 2 Kings 4. 23. where the *Shunamite's* husband asks her *wherefore ſhe would go to the man of God that day, ſeeing it was neither new-moon nor Sabbath.* Whereby it is both evident, that the *Prophets* did undertake the office of inſtructing the people on their *ſolemn Feſtivals*, and that it was their cuſtom to reſort to them for that end. Thus we ſee what care *God* took for the inſtruction of his people in a time of ſo general an *Apoſtaſie* as that of the *ten tribes* was, when the *Church of God* could not be known by that *conſtant viſibility* and *outward Glory* which ſome ſpeak ſo much of, but was then *clouded* in *obſcurity*, and *ſhrouded* it ſelf under the *mantles* of ſome *Prophets* which *God* continued among them, and that not by any *lineal ſucceſſion* neither, though the *Jews* would fain make the *gift* of *Prophecy* to be a kind of *Cabala* too, and conveyed in a conſtant ſucceſſion from one Prophet to another. Neither were theſe *Schools of the Prophets* only in *Iſrael*, but in *Judah* likewiſe was *God* known, and *his Name was great among theſe Schools there.* In *Jeruſalem* it ſelf there was a *Colledge* where *Huldah* the *Propheteſs* lived.

V. Manaſſ. Ben Iſrael Concil. in Exod. 9. 35.

lived, 2 *Kings* 22. 14. some render *Misna in secunda urbis parte*; for *Jerusalem* was divided into the *upper* and *nether part* of the City. *Abulensis* and *Lyra* will have it referr to the *three Walls* of the *City* in which the *three chief parts* of it were comprized; in the *first*, *the Temple and the King's Palace*; in the *second*, *the Nobles and the Prophets houses*; and in the *third*, *the common people*. *Josephus* seems to favour the division of the City into *three parts*; but *Pineda* thinks the *second part* of the *City* was most inhabited by *Artificers*, and that the *Prophets*, *and the wise men*, and such as frequented the *Temple*, most dwelt *in the City of* David within the *first Wall*; and therefore he conjectures that the *Colledge* was upon Mount *Sion*, (and so properly called *Sion* Colledge) and he explains that *house* which *wisdom is said to have built*, *and hewn out her seven pillars*, Prov. 9. 1. by this *Colledge*, which he supposeth was built by *Solomon in Mount* Sion, and thence *ver.* 3. *She is said to cry upon the highest places of the City.* Thus much may serve concerning the *original* and *institution of these Schools of the Prophets.*

Joseph. de bell. Jud. l. 6. c. 6. Pineda de rebus Sol. l. 3. c. 28.

I now come to the second thing promised concerning the *Schools of the Prophets*, which is, *that it was God's ordinary method to call those persons out of these Schools, whom he did employ in the discharge of the Prophetical office.* Two things will be necessary for the clearing of this: *First*, what *tendency* their *education* in *those Schools* had towards the fitting them for their *prophetical Office.* Secondly, *what evidence the Scripture gives us that God called the Prophets out from these Colledges.* The *first* of these is very requisite to be cleared, because the *prophetical office* depending upon *immediate inspiration*, it is hard to conceive what *influence* any *antecedent* and *preparatory dispositions* can have upon receiving the *prophe-spirit.* It is commonly known how much the generality of *Jewish Writers* do insist on the necessity of these *qualifications* antecedent to a *spirit of Prophecy.* 1. *An excellent natural temper.* 2. *Good accomplishments both of wit and fortunes.* 3. *Separation from the world.* 4. *Congruity of place* (which they make proper to *Judæa*) 5. *Opportunity of time.* 6. *And divine inspiration.* These are so largely discoursed of by many learned men from *Jewish Writers*, that it will be both tedious and impertinent to recite much of their opinions concerning

Sect. 5.

V. G. Vor. in Maim. fundam. leg. c. 7. Sect. 1. Mr. Smith of Prophecy. c. 8.

cerning them: who, since they have lost the gift of *Prophecy*, seem to have lost too that *wisdom* and *natural understanding*, which they make one of the most *necessary qualifications* of a *Prophet*. It is not easie to imagine what subserviency *riches* could have to a *prophetical spirit*, unless the *Jews* be of *Simon Magus* his opinion, that these gifts of the *Holy Ghost* may be purchased with money; and if so, they think themselves in as likely a way to bid fair for a *prophetical spirit*, as any People in the world. Or is it that they think it impossible any without them should have that *free*, *cheerfull* and *generous spirit*, which they make so necessary to a *prophetick spirit*, that it is an axiome of great authority with them, *Spiritus sanctus non residet super hominem mœstum*; and they think *Elisha* his fit of passion did exclude his *prophetick spirit* from him, which he was fain to *retrieve* again with a fit of *Musick*. There are only two sorts of those *antecedent dispositions* which seem to bear any *affinity* with the *prophetick spirit*: And those are such as tended to the *improvement* of their *natural faculties*, and such as tended to their *advancement* in *piety*, and consequently to the subduing all *irregular motions* in their *souls*: Not that either of these did *concurr* by way of efficiency to the production of a *spirit* of *Prophecy* (which is an opinion *Maimonides* seems very favourable to) but that *God* might make *choice* particularly of such *persons*, to remove all *prejudices* against them in those they were sent unto. For nothing could possibly *dissatisfie* them more concerning *divine inspiration*, than if the *person* who pretended to it were of very *weak* and *shallow intellectuals*, or known to be of an *irregular conversation*. In order therefore to the fuller *satisfaction* of men concerning these two *qualifications*, this *Institution* of them in the *Schools* of the *Prophets* was of great *subserviency*, because therein their only *employment* was to *improve* in *knowledge*, and especially in *true piety*. This latter being the most necessary disposition, since the Apostle hath told us that the Prophets were *Holy men, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*. And in order to this, the greatest part we can find of the *exercises* of those who were *educated* in these *Schools* of the *Prophets*, were *instructions* in the *Law*, and the solemn *celebration* of the *praises* of *God*: Which appears in *Scripture* to have been their chief employment as *Prophets*, and by which they

More Nevoc. l. 2. c. 36.

2 Pet. 1. 21.

are

are said to *Prophesie*: So at *Gibeah* at the Oratory there, *we find a company of Prophets coming down from the high place with a Psaltery, a Tabret and Pipe, and a Harp before them, and Prophesying.* 1 Sam. 10. 5.

Sect. 6.

It may seem somewhat strange to consider what relation these *Musical instruments* had to the *Prophesying* here mentioned. Are *Musical notes* like some *seeds Naturalists* speak of, which will help to excite a prophetick spirit? Or do they tend to *elevate* the *spirits* of men, and so put them into a greater *capacity* of *Enthusiasm*? Or is it because *Musick* is so excellent for allaying the *tumults* of inward *passions*; and so fitting the soul for the better *entertainment* of the *Divine Spirit*? Or was all this *Prophesying* here spoken of nothing else but *vocal* and *instrumental Musick*? So some indeed understand it, that it was only the *praising God with spiritual songs and melody*; wherein one as the *Præcentor* began a *hymn*; which the rest took from him and carried on. I confess it carries the fairest probability with it, that this *Prophesying* with *Musical instruments* was at their *places* and *times* of *sacrifice*, an *adjunct*, if not a *part* of the *solemn service* of *God*: which was managed chiefly by the *Choir* of the *Sons* of the *Prophets* which were resident there, and were trained up in all exercises of *piety* and *devotion*. But yet I cannot see any reason to think that all this *Prophesying* was merely singing of *Hymns*, and *playing* upon their *Musical instruments* to them, as some imagine, because there seems to be implied some *immediate impulses* of a *prophetick spirit*, by what *Samuel* said to *Saul*, that when he came among the Prophets, *the Spirit of the Lord would come upon him, and he should prophesie with them, and he should become another man.* What strange *impulse* and wonderfull *transformation* was this merely for *Saul* to join with the *Prophets* in their *praises* of *God*? And this needed not so much *admiration* as followed there upon this action of *Saul*'s, that it should become a *Proverb*, *Is* Saul *also among the Prophets*? Certainly *Saul* was a very great hater of all *spiritual Musick* before, if it became a *Proverb* merely for his being present at, or joyning with this company in *singing* their *Hymns*. Therefore others think that those who are said particularly to *prophesie* at these *Musick meetings*, were some persons as chief among the rest, who having their *spirits* elevated by the *Musick*, did compose *Hymns*,

1 Sam. 10. 6.

1 Sam. 10. 12.

Hymns upon the place by a *Divine Energy* inwardly moving their *minds*. So that there were properly *divine raptures* in ſome of them, which tranſported them beyond the ordinary power of *fancy* or *imagination*, in dictating ſuch *Hymns* as might be *ſuitable* for the deſign of celebrating the *honour* of *God*.

Sect. 7. Neither may it ſeem ſtrange that ſuch an *Enthuſiaſtick Spirit* ſhould ſeize on them only at ſuch *ſolemn times*, ſince we read in the *New Teſtament* of a like exerciſe of ſuch gifts in the *Church* of *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 14. 26. where we ſee in *coming together every one had a Pſalm, a Doctrine, a Tongue, a Revelation*, &c. Whereby it appears that they were inſpired upon the place; *etiam extemporales Hymni ſæpe ab afflatu erant*, as *Grotius* there obſerves; as we ſee it in frequent inſtances in Scripture, of *Simeon* and *Anna*, *Moſes* and *Miriam*, *Deborah* and *Iſaiah*; and in the Chriſtian Church after that *Land-flood* of inſpired *gifts* was much *abated* in the *Church*, they kept up a *cuſtom* much like to theſe *extemporal hymns*, as appears evi-

Apol. c. 39. dently by *Tertullian*, *poſt aquam manualem & lumina ut quiſque de Scripturis ſanctis vel de proprio ingenio poteſt, provocatur in medium Deo canere*; After they had ended their *Love-Feaſts*, they begun their *Hymns*, which were either taken from the

Ep. l. 10. *Scriptures*, or of their *own compoſition*. Which *Pliny* takes no-

Ep. 97. tice of as a great part of the *Chriſtians* worſhip, that they did *ſecum invicem carmen Chriſto quaſi Deo dicere, they joyned in ſinging hymns to Chriſt as God*. Nay, we find ſomething very *parallel* to this preſerved among the *ruins* of the *Heathen worſhip*; ſuch were the *Aſſamenta* among the old *Romans*, which were peculiarly *ſung* to the *honour* of ſome particular *God*; thence the *Aſſamenta Janualia, Junonia, Minervia*, which were *privata poemata & carmina in ſingulos eos Deos conſcripta*, as

Conject. in Varr. p. 121. the learned *Joſeph Scaliger* obſerves. So likewiſe the *Greeks* had their *ſolemn hymns* to their *Gods*, ſome to the *propitious Gods*, which they called καλὸς ὕμνος, and the *Latins* properly *Indigitamenta*, and *Carmen calatorium*; others they had to their *Vejoves*, or *Læva numina*, which they called ὕμνος ἀποτροπαίος· the *Latins*, *Carmen Averruncale*; but beſides theſe, they had ſome peculiar to the ſeveral *Deities*, as ὁ ὕπατος to *Diana*, Παιὰν to *Apollo*, Ἴουλος to *Ceres*, *Dithyrambus* to *Bacchus*, *Adonidia* to *Adonis*, as *Proclus* tells us in his *Chreſtomathia*. And it is withall evident, that the *Heathens* thought ſome of their

their *Prieſts* inſpired while they were *performing* theſe *ſolemn Devotions* to the *Gods* (which probably was by *Satan*, as many other things in *Heathen worſhip* taken up in *imitation* of theſe inſpired *hymns*, and *Muſick* uſed by the *ſons* of the *Prophets*) but their *hymns* were ſo *compoſed*, as to be fit rather to *tranſport* men beyond the power of their *reaſon*, than to *compoſe* and *ſweeten* it, which was ſuitable to the fanatick *Enthuſiaſm*, which was ſo common among them. So *Proclus* tells us that the *Io-Bacche* was βεβακχισμένον πολλῷ φρυάγματι, *full of noiſe* and *din*; and the *Dithyrambus* was κακοτυπῶν καὶ πολὺ τὸ ἐνθουσιῶδες, μὴ χρείας ἐμφαίνων, *a kind of extatick Moricedance*, and their *Prieſts* were apprehended by them to be under a *real Enthuſiaſm* at theſe *Solemnities*. So the *Corybantes* are deſcribed rather like *mad men* than mere *Enthuſiaſts* by *Strabo*; they were ἐνθουσιαστικοί τινες καὶ βακχικοὶ, as he deſcribes them, *dancing about with their cymbals and drums, and arms and pipes*, (as though a *Bedlam* had been broke looſe among them) yet this was in high eſteem among them; for, as *Strabo* after ſaith, ὅτι ἐνθουσιασμὸς ἔδοξεν τινὰ θείαν ἴσχειν δύναμιν, καὶ τῷ μανικῷ ἤθει πλησιάζειν, *this Enthuſiaſm ſeemed to have a divine touch with it, and to come very near to a prophetick ſpirit.*

Apud Phot. Bib. Cod. 239.

Geogr. l. 10.

But though the *Propheſying* with *Muſick* among the *ſons* of the *Prophets*, might be by ſome *extemporary hymns* immediately dictated by the *Præcentor* of the *Chorus*; yet we are not to *imagine* any ſuch *frantick actions* among them as were among the *Curetes* and *Corybantes*, it being always the *Devil's* temper to *over-doe*, when he ſtrives to *imitate*, and inſtead of *ſolemn* and *ſet devotions*, to *carry* men beyond all *ſenſe* and *reaſon*. The *Spirit* of *God* did never *dictate* any *Io-Bacche's* or *Dithyrambs* to *tranſport* and *amuſe* the *ſpirits* of *men*; but thoſe *ſweet airs* which might both *compoſe* and *elevate* the ſpirits of all that heard them. For in probability the *ſpirits* of all theſe *Prophets* were as *Lutes* tuned to the ſame *height*, that when the *Spirit* of *God* did *ſtrike* upon *one* of them, the *reſt* preſently *anſwered* to it, and ſo made up an entire *Conſort* among them. So *Menochius* thinks the *Spirit* of *God* not only moved the *ſpirit* of him who was the *Præcentor*, but the reſt likewiſe who joyned with him; and they are ſaid to propheſie, ſaith *Torniellus*, *forte quod non quaſcunque ſed Propheticas duntaxat cantiones præcinerent*; but from hence we clearly ſee

Annal ad A.M. 2945. *Sect.* 14.

ſee what the great *employment* was in theſe *Schools* of the *Prophets*, which, as the ſame Author expreſſeth, it was *ſtatis horis de rebus divinis diſſerere & divinis laudibus vacare*; and thereby we underſtand what reference this *inſtitution* had in order to the *prophetical office*, becauſe the *Spirit* of *God* did much appear among them, and all their *exerciſes* tended to *piety*, and ſo did remove all *prejudices* from their *perſons*, when *God* did ſend them abroad afterwards.

Sect. 8. And ſo it is evident he *frequently* did, not to ſay always, for that were to put too great a reſtraint upon the *boundleſs ſpirit* of *God*: For ſometimes, as will appear afterwards, *God* ſent the *Prophets* upon *extraordinary meſſages*, and then *furniſhed* them with *ſufficient evidence* of their *Divine commiſſion*, without being beholding to the *Teſtimonials* of the *Schools* of the *Prophets*. But beſides theſe, *God* had a kind of *Leiger-Prophets* among his *People*; ſuch were the moſt of thoſe whom we read of in *Scripture*, which were no *Pen-men* of the *ſacred Scripture*; ſuch in *David*'s time we may conceive *Gad* and *Nathan*, and afterwards we read of many other *Prophets* and *Seers* among them, to whom the people made their reſort; Now theſe in probability were ſuch as had been *trained* up in the *Prophetick Schools*, wherein the *Spirit* of *God* did appear, but in a more *fixed* and *ſettled* way than in the *extraordinary Prophets* whom *God* did call out on ſome more *ſignal* occaſions, ſuch as *Iſaiah* and *Jeremiah* were. We have a clear foundation for ſuch a *diſtinction* of *Prophets* in thoſe words of *Amos* to *Amaziah*, Amos 7. 14, 15. *I was no Prophet, neither was I a Prophets ſon; but I was a herdſman and a gatherer of Sycamore fruits: And the Lord took me as I followed the flock; and the Lord ſaid unto me, Go propheſie to my people Iſrael.* Some underſtand the firſt words, *I was not a Prophet*, that he was not born a *Prophet*, as *Jeremiah* was, not deſigned and ſet apart to it from his *mother's womb*; but I rather think by his not being a *Prophet*, he means, he was none of thoſe *reſident Prophets* in the *Colledges* or *Schools* of them, not any of thoſe who had led a *prophetick life*, and withdrawn themſelves from *converſe* with the *world*; nor *was I* (ſaith he) *the ſon of a Prophet*, *i. e.* not *brought up* in *diſcipleſhip* under thoſe *Prophets*, and thereby *trained* up in order to the *prophetick function*. *Non didici inter diſcipulos Prophetarum*, as *Pellican* renders it; *nec inſtitutione*

stitutione qua filii Prophetarum quasi ad donum Prophetiæ à parentibus præparabantur, saith *Estius*. *Non à puero educatus in Scholis Propheticis*; so *Calvin* and most other modern *Interpreters* understand it as well as *Abarbinel* and the Jewish Writers. Whereby it is evident that *God*'s ordinary way for the *Prophets*, was to take such as had been trained up and educated in order to that end, although *God* did not tie up *himself* to this *method*, but sometimes called one from the *Court*, as he did *Isaiah*; sometimes one from the *herds*, as here he did *Amos*, and bid them *go propheſie to the house of Israel*. There was then a kind of a *standing College* of *Prophets* among the *Israelites*, who *shined* as *fixed Stars* in the *Firmament*; and there were others who had a more *planetary motion*, and withall a more *lively* and *resplendent illumination* from the *fountain* of *prophetick light*. And further it seems that the *spirit* of *Prophecy* did not ordinarily *seize* on any, but such whose institution was in *order* to that *end*, by the great *admiration* which was caused among the people at *Saul*'s so sudden *propheſying*, that it became a *Proverb*, *Is* Saul *also among the Prophets?* which had not given the least *foundation* for an *adage* for a *strange* and *unwonted thing*, unless the most common appearances of the *spirit* of *Prophecy* had been among those who were trained up in order to it. Thus I suppose we have fully cleared the first *reason* why there was no *necessity* for the *ordinary Prophets*, whose chief *office* was *instruction* of the people, to prove their commission by *miracles*, because *God* had promised a *succession* of *Prophets* by *Moses*, and these were brought up ordinarily to that end among them; so that all *prejudices* were sufficiently removed from their persons without any such *extraordinary power* as that of *miracles*.

1 Sam. 10. 12, 19, 24.

CHAP. V.

The tryal of Prophetical Doctrine.

Rules of trying Prophets eſtabliſhed in the Law of Moſes. *The puniſhment of pretenders. The ſeveral ſorts of falſe Prophets. The caſe of the Prophet at* Bethel *diſcuſſed. The tryal of falſe Prophets belonging to the great Sanhedrin. The particular rules whereby the doctrine of Prophets was judged. The proper notion of a Prophet, not foretelling future contingencies, but having immediate divine revelation. Several principles laid down for clearing the doctrine of the Prophets.* 1. *That immediate dictates of natural light are not to be the meaſure of divine revelation. Several grounds for divine revelation from natural light.* 2. *Whatever is directly repugnant to the dictates of nature, cannot be of divine revelation.* 3. *No divine revelation doth contradict a divine poſitive Law without ſufficient evidence of God's intention to repeal that Law.* 4. *Divine revelation in the Prophets was not to be meaſured by the words of the Law, but by the intention and reaſon of it. The prophetical Office a kind of Chancery to the Law of* Moſes.

Sect. 1. THE ſecond reaſon *why thoſe Prophets whoſe main office was inſtruction of the people, or merely foretelling future events, needed not to confirm their doctrine by miracles,* is, *becauſe they had certain rules of tryal by their Law whereby to diſcern the falſe Prophets from the true.* So that if they were deceived by them, it was their own *oſcitancy* and *inadvertency* which was the *cauſe* of it. *God* in that *Law* which was *confirmed* by *miracles* undoubtedly *divine*, had eſtabliſhed a *Court* of *tryal* for *prophetick Spirits*, and given ſuch certain *rules* of *procedure* in it, that no *men* needed to be *deceived* unleſs they *would* themſelves. And there was a greater *neceſſity* of ſuch a certain way of *tryal* among them, becauſe it could not otherwiſe be *expected* but in a *Nation* where a *prophetick Spirit* was ſo *common*, there would be very many *pretenders* to it, who might much *endanger* the *faith* of the *people* unleſs there were ſome certain *way* to find them out. And the more effectually to deter men either from *counterfeiting* a *prophetick Spirit*,

or

or from *hearkening* to *such* as *did*, *God* appointed a *severe punishment* for every such *pretender*, *viz.* upon *legal conviction*, that he be *punished* with *death*. Deut. 18. 20. *But the Prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other Gods, shall surely die.* The *Jews* generally understand this of *strangling*, as they do *always* in the *Law*, when the particular manner of *death* is not expressed. And therein a *false prophet* and a *seducer* were distinguished each from other, that a mere *seducer* was to be *stoned* to *death* under sufficient *testimony*, Deut. 13. 6, 10. But the *false prophet* is there said in general only to be put to *death*, Deut. 13. 1, 5. The main *difference* between the *seducer* and *false prophet* was, that the *seducer* sought by *cunning persuasions* and plausible *arguments* to draw them off from the *worship* of the *true God*; but the *false prophet* always *pretended divine revelation* for what he persuaded them to, whether he gave out that he had that *revelation* from the true *God*, or from *Idols* and *false Gods*. So that the mere *pretence* to *divine revelation* was that which *God* would have punished with so great *severity*.

V. Maimon. de Idol. c. 5. s. 1. & ibi Vossium.

The *Jews* tell us of three *sorts* of *prophets* who were to be punished with *death* by *men*, and three other sorts who were *reserved* to divine *punishment*: Of the first rank were these; 1. *He that prophesied that which he had not heard*, and for this they instance in *Zedekiah* the son of *Chenaanah*, who made him horns of iron, and said, *Thus saith the Lord*, this was the *lying prophet*. 2. *He that speaks that which was revealed not to him but to another*, and for this they instance in *Hananiah* the son of *Azur*, (but how truly I shall not determine) this was the *plagiary prophet*. 3. *He that prophesied in the name of an Idol*, as the *prophets* of *Baal* did, this was the *idol prophet*. These three, when once fully convicted, were to be put to *death*. The other rank of those which were left to *God's hand* consisted of these; 1. *He that stifles and smothers his own prophecy*, *as* Jonas *did*, by which it may seem that when the *divine Spirit* did overshadow the *understanding* of the *prophets*, yet it offered no *violence* to their *faculties*, but left them to the free *determination* of their own *wills* in the *execution* of their *office*; but this must be understood of a lower degree of *prophecy*; for at some times their *prophecies* were *as fire in their bones*, that they

Sect. 2.

V. Except. Gem. Sanhed. c. 10. *s.* 3.

1 King. 22. 11.

Jer. 28. 11.

Jer. 20. 9.

they were never at any reſt till they had *diſcharged* their *office*. But withall by the example of *Jonas*, we ſee, that though the *Spirit* of *prophecy*, like the *fire* on the *Altar*, could only be *kindled* from *heaven*, yet it might be *deſtroyed* when it was not *maintained* with ſomething to feed upon; or when it met not with ſuitable entertainment from the *ſpirits* of thoſe it fell upon, it might *retreat* back again to heaven, or at leaſt lie hid in the *embers* till a *new blaſt* from the *Spirit* of *God* doth ἀναζωπυρῆν, *retrieve* it into its former *heat* and *activity*. Thus it was with *Jonas*. 2. The other was, *He that deſpiſed the words of a true prophet*; of ſuch *God* ſaith, *Deut.* 18. 19. *And it ſhall come to paſs, that whoſoever will not hearken to my words which he ſhall ſpeak in my name, I will require it of him.* Which *Maimonides* explains by מיתה בידי שמים, *death by the hands of God*, which he thus diſtinguiſheth from the *Cereth*, that he makes the death *per manus cœli*, to be *leſs* than the *Cereth*, becauſe this *latter* continued in the *ſoul* after *death*, but the other was *expiated* by *death*; but generally they interpret it of a *ſudden death* which falls upon the perſon. 3. The laſt is, *he who hearkens not to the words of his own prophecy*; of which we have a moſt remarkable inſtance in *Scripture*, concerning the *Prophet* whom *God* ſent to *Bethel* (whom *Tertullian* calls *Sameas*, the *Jews*, *Hedua* whom *God* deſtroyed in an unuſual manner for not obſerving the *command* which *God* had given him, *not to eat bread nor drink water at Bethel, nor turn again by the way he came.* Neither was it any excuſe to this *Prophet* that the old *Prophet* at *Bethel told him that an Angel ſpake unto him by the word of the Lord, that he ſhould turn back.* For, 1. Thoſe whom *God* reveals his *will* unto, he gives them full *aſſurance* of it, in that they have a *clear* and *diſtinct perception* of *God* upon their own *minds*; and ſo they have no doubt, but it is the *Word* of the *Lord* which comes unto them; but this *Prophet* could have no ſuch *certainty* of the *divine revelation* which was made to *another*, eſpecially when it came *immediately* to *contradict* that which was ſo ſpecially enjoyned him. 2. Where *God* commands a *Prophet* to doe any thing in the *purſuit* of his *meſſage*, there he can have no ground to queſtion whether *God* ſhould *countermand* it or no by another *Prophet*; becauſe that was in effect to thwart the whole *deſign* of his *meſſage*. So it was in this action of the *Prophet*; for *God* intended his not

Maim. de fundam. legis, c. 9. *ſ.* 4. *V. Abarbinel de Cereth. apud Buxtorf. de ſponſ. & divort. p.* 182.

1 King 13. 9. Ver. 18.

eating

eating and *drinking* in *Bethel* to testifie how much he *loathed* and *abominated* that *place* since its being *polluted* with *Idolatry*. 3 He might have just *cause* to *question* the *Integrity* of the *old Prophet*, both because of his *living* in *Bethel*, and not openly, according to his *office*, *reproving* their *Idolatry*, and that *God* should send him out of *Judæa* upon that very errand, which would not have seemed so probable, if there had been *true Prophets resident* upon the *place*. 4. The *thing* he desired him to *do*, was not an *act* of that *weight* and *importance* on which *God* used to send his *Word* to any *Prophets*, much less by one *Prophet* to contradict what he had said by another, and therefore *Tertullian* saith of him *pœnam deserti jejunii luit*, *God* punished him for *breaking* his *Fast* at *Bethel*; and therefore that message of this *Prophet* seemed to *gratifie* more mans *carnal appetite*, than usually the *actions* of *Prophets* did, which were most times matters of *hardship* and *uneasiness* to the *flesh*. 5. However all these were, yet he *yielded* too *soon*, especially having so much *reason* on his *side* as he had; being well *assured* that *God* had commanded him, he had reason to see some clear *evidence* of a *countermand*, before he altered his mind: if he had seen any thing upon tryal which might have *staggered* his *faith*, he ought to have made his immediate *recourse* to God by *prayer* for the settlement of his *mind* and removal of this great *temptation*. But so easily to hearken to the *words* of a *lying Prophet*, which *contradicted* his own *message*, argued either great *unbelief* as to his own *commission*, or too great *easiness* and *inadvertency* in being drawn aside by the *old Prophet*. And therefore God made that *old Prophet* himself in the *midst* of his *entertainment*, as with a *hand-writing against the wall* to tell him *he was weighed in the balance* and *found too light*, and therefore his *life* should be taken from him. Thus we see how dangerous a thing it was either to *counterfeit* a *Spirit* of *Prophecy*, or to hearken to *those* who did.

De jejuniis, cap. 16.

Sect. 3. It is the generally received *opinion* among the *Jewish Doctors*, that the *cognizance* and *tryal* of *false Prophets* did peculiarly belong to the *great Sanhedrin*. And that this was one end of its institution. So *Maimonides* after he hath largely discoursed of the *punishment* of a *seducer*, and speaking of that of a *false Prophet*, he lays this down as a standing rule among them אין רנין נביא השקר אלא בבר שלו עא, *No false Prophet*

De Idololat. c. 5. s. 11.

was to be judged but in the Court of seventy one; which was the number of the *great Sanhedrin*. And there is some *thing* looks very like this in the *proceedings* of the *people* of *Israel* against the
Jer. 26. 8. *Prophet Jeremiah*; for the *people*, the *Priests* and the *Prophets*, they laid *hold* on him; and immediately after we read that the *Princes* of *Judah* (by whom *Grotius* understands the *Sena-*
Ver. 10. *tors* of the *great Sanhedrin*) *they came up from the King's house to*
V. Grot. in l. & Seldn. de Syn. l. 2. c. 15. f. 4. & l. 3. c. 6. f. 4. *the house of the Lord, and sat down in the entry of the new gate of the Lords house*; (which probably was the place where the *great Sanhedrin* sate) where after a particular *examination* of
Jer. 26. 16. *Jeremiah*, they acquit him as a *person not worthy to die* upon a
Jer. 38. 5. counterfeiting *Prophecy*, but declare *that he spake unto them in the name of the Lord*. And in this sence *Grotius* likewise understands what is said of *Zedekiah* concerning *Jeremiah* to the *Princes* of *Judah* afterwards, *Behold he is in your hand*; *for the King is not he that can do ought against you*; *i. e.* saith *Grotius*, *in manibus Synedrii cujus est judicare de Propheta vero aut falso*. And to this many make those *words* of *our Sa-*
Luk. 13. 33. *viour* refer, *that it is impossible a Prophet should perish out of* Je-
Matth. 23. 70. rusalem, because the seat of the *great Sanhedrin* was in *Jerusalem*; and so elsewhere *our Saviour* saith, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee*; because there it was the *true Prophets* were destroyed as though they had been *false ones*, and *Gods* own *messengers* punished with the *death* of *seducers*, which was *lapidation*. And on this very account many are of opinion that *our Saviour* was condemned by the *Sanhedrin* at *Jerusalem*; which is supposed to have been assembled in the house of *Caiaphas* the *High Priest*, when *Christ* was carried *thither* for *examination*; which some think to have been at his *lodgings* in the *Temple*, others at his *Palace* in the *City*. For we read that the *Chief Priests*, and the *Elders*, and all the *Council* were
Matth. 26. 59. met *together* at the *High Priest's Palace* in order to *our Saviour's* tryal. The next *morning* they were met *early* together again in order to the further *scanning* of this *business*; but they seem not to *examine Christ* concerning a *true spirit* of *Prophecy*, but concerning his *being* the *Messias*, and calling himself the
Matth. 26. 63. *Son* of *God*, and so they would seem rather to proceed upon the *Law* against *blasphemy*, than that against *false Prophets*.

Sect. 4. But that which was the greatest *security* of the *people* against

gainſt the *impoſture* of *falſe Prophets*, was the certain *rules* of judging them which were laid down in the *Law* of *Moſes*; Which may be comprehended under theſe *two heads*, ſuch as *concern* their *doctrine*, or ſuch as concern their *predictions*. Firſt, ſuch as concerned the *Prophets doctrine*, which ſhould eſpecially be looked after, becauſe the *main office* of a *Prophet* was to be *interpres & internuncius divinæ voluntatis*, to be *a revealer of God's will to men*. For the *primary notion* of a *Prophet* doth not lie in foretelling *future events*, but in *declaring* and *interpreting* to the *world* the *mind of God* which he receives by *immediate revelation* from himſelf So that the *receiving* what he makes *known* by *immediate revelation*, is that which *formally conſtitutes* a *Prophet*; but it is wholly *extrinſecal* and *accidental* what *time* his *Prophecy* reſpects, whether paſt, preſent, or to come; but becauſe *future contingencies* are the *furtheſt* out of the *reach* of *humane underſtanding*, therefore the *predictions* of ſuch have been chiefly looked on as the chief *note* and *Character* of a *Prophet*, as being apprehended to be the *ſtrongeſt evidence* of *Divine revelation*. And from hence it is in *Scripture* that the *Patriarchs* as *Abraham* and *others* are called *Prophets*, not becauſe of any *predictions* uttered by them, but becauſe of the *frequency* of *immediate Divine revelations* among them. And hence likewiſe thoſe in the *New Teſtament* who expounded the *Scriptures*, by *immediate inſpiration* are called *Prophets*; and this was the ἀποκάλυψις ſpoken of by the *Apoſtle*, the *expoſition* of the *hidden myſteries* of the *Old Teſtament* by an *immediate inſpiration*. And there is no *word* in the *Hebrew* for a *Prophet*, which may not *equally reſpect* all *differences* of *time*, but every one doth import *immediate inſpiration*; for נביא properly is one *qui revelat abſcondita*; ראה a *Seer* chiefly reſpects the *clear repreſentation* of the *intellectual ſpecies by the lumen propheticum* to the *underſtanding*, and חוזה carries an *equal indifferency* to all circumſtances of times.

Pſal. 105. 15. Gen. 20. 7.

1 Cor. 14. 26.

Vid. Alſtedii Trifol. proph. p. 53.

This being then the chief *notion* of a *Prophet*, whatever he declared as the *mind* and *will* of *God*, muſt be ſearched and examined, to ſee what *conſonancy* it hath thereto. For the queſtion which *Moſes* ſuppoſeth, is founded upon clear and evident reaſon, *And if thou ſhalt ſay in thine heart, How ſhall we know the Word which the Lord hath not ſpoken?* For it being plain that there

Sect. 5.

Deut. 18. 21.

there may be *false Prophets* as well as *true*, we had need of some certain *rules* to judge of what is delivered for *divine revelation*. For the clearing of which *important question*, I lay down these *principles*.

1. *The immediate dictates of natural light are no sufficient standard to judge of divine revelation by.* I mean not in reference to *consonancy* or *repugnancy* to *natural light*, but in reference to the *extent* and *latitude* of *divine revelation*, *i. e.* that *natural light* doth not contain in it whatever may be *known of God* or of his *Will*; and that upon these reasons: 1. It implies no *repugnancy* to any *dictate* of *nature*, that *God* should reveal any thing more of his *mind* and *will*, than is contained in the *light of nature*. 2. *Nature* reacheth, as to *matters* concerning *religion*, no further than the *obligation* to *duty*, but leaves the particular *determination* of the manner of *obedience* to *divine positive Laws*, as is clear in reference to the *time*, *place*, and *particular duties* of *worship*. 3. *Nature owning* an *universal obligation* to the *will* of *God* in whatever he shall *command*, doth suppose a *power* in *God* to *command* what he *pleaseth*. 4 *Nature* is *sensible* of its own *decays*, and the *imperfection* of its own *light*, and therefore seems rather to require further *illumination*, than to put any bar against it. 5. *Man's happiness* being *a free gift* of *God's*, it stands to the *highest reason* that he should have the prescribing of the *conditions* which are in order to it; now these *conditions* being the *results*, not of *God's nature*, but of his *arbitrarious will*, it is impossible that *natural light* could ever reach to the full discovery of them. 6. It hath been the *general sense* of all Nations in the *world*, that *God* may *reveal* more of his *will* than *nature* can reach unto; which sense discovers it self in two things. 1. *Praying* to their several *gods* for *direction*. 2. *Hearkening* after pretended *oracles*, which the *Devil* could never have had that *advantage* of *deceiving* the *world* by, had it not been for this general *sense* of *mankind*, that there wanted some particular *revelation* from *God* to make men *happy*. So then this may be assumed as a *principle*, That *God* may *reveal* more of his *mind* and *will* to *mankind*, than he hath done by the *dictates* of mere *natural light* and *reason*.

2. *Whatever speaks a direct repugnancy to any of the fundamental dictates of nature, cannot be of divine revelation.* For those being founded, not upon any *positive* or *arbitrary will*, but upon

Sect. 6.

on those *inward impressions* which are derived from the *divine nature* its self, it cannot in *reason* be supposed that *God* should *commission* any to *enervate* his own *fundamental Law*; and so by one *will* to contradict *another*. *Placitum Regis* must never *stand* against the *Placita Coronæ*: Those things which depend upon *fundamental* and *established Laws*, hold good against any *positive sentence* or *declaration* of a *Prince's will*; Because he is *supposed* to have *bound* up himself by the established *Laws*; and therefore any *thing* else which comes from him, *contrary* to them, is supposed not to be the *Will* of the *Prince*, but of the *persons persuading* him to it. But this now cannot be supposed in *God*, that he should be any ways drawn to *cassate* the *obligation* of what is *imprinted* upon the *souls* of *men* as his own *Law*. But yet we must distinguish between *nulling* the *general obligation*, and *altering* the *particular nature* of any *thing* which *depends* upon that *general Law*, the *first* in any case is *impossible*, that any *divine revelation* should make it not to be mans *duty* to *obey* his *maker*, or not to be a *sin* to *commit murder*, to *lye*, or to *steal* from *another*; but there may come a *particular revelation* from *God* to *alter* the *respects* and *nature* of such *things* as do immediately *depend* upon his *own dominion*; as the *lives* of persons and the *properties* of *things* are; and thus *God* did reveal to *Abraham* that he should go and *sacrifice* his *son*, which had been no *murder* when done upon *God's immediate command*, and for a *sacrifice* to *himself*, and therefore would have been *acceptable* as a *testimony* of entire *obedience* (which *God* did accept without the *act*) and so the *Israelites* taking the *Ægyptians Jewels*, and *dispossessing* the *Canaanites*, did depend upon *God's* immediate *disposal* of these things to them; which otherwise had been a *sin* in them, and no doubt was so to any that were *unsatisfied* whether *God* had *immediately* commanded it or no. Or from hence to inferr any *general rule*, is no doubt a breach of *divine commands*, and contrary to his nature and will.

Where God hath established a positive Law, prescribing a form and manner wherein he will be worshipped, it is sufficient evidence of a false Prophet, to go about to null the obligation of that Law; unless there be as great evidences given, that God did intend the establishing a new Law by that person, as he did at first the institution of the old by the hand of Moses. This latter clause is 3. *Sect.* 7.

inſerted, to ſhew that the *ſucceeding* of the *doctrine* of *Chriſt*, into the place of the *Law* of *Moſes*, doth not bear any *repugnanc*, to the *Hypotheſis* laid down, there being greater *evidences* of *God's* intending the *aboliſhing* the *ceremonial Law* by the *Goſpel* of *Chriſt*, than there were of the eſtabliſhment of it by *Moſes*. But of thoſe afterwards. I now only ſpeak of ſuch as upon the mere *pretence* of *divine revelation*, ſhould *deſtroy* any *precept* of an eſtabliſhed *poſitive Law*; and this, as far as we can find, was the great *rule* the *Jews* went by; if any thing were *ſpoken* by any *Prophet*, contrary to the *Law* of *Moſes*, or tending to the *alteration* of the *worſhip* of *God* eſtabliſhed thereby, he was accounted a *falſe Prophet*. The modern *Jews* to juſtifie themſelves in their own *unbelief*, as to the *doctrine* of *Chriſt*, *extend* this further than the *Law* doth; for they *enlarge* it to all the *precepts* of the *ceremonial Law*; whereas *God* in the *Law* ſeems to limit it to the *Moral Law*, and chiefly inſiſts on the three firſt precepts of the *Decalogue*; and therefore condemns ſuch a *one* as *ſpake in the name of the Lord, when he had not commanded them*, Deut. 18. 20. and ſuch as *endeavoured to bring in idolatry*, Deut. 13. 1, 2, 3. where though the *falſe Prophet* ſhould offer to do *ſigns* and *wonders* before them, yet if his *intention* were to *draw* them to *worſhip falſe Gods*, they were not to hearken unto him. And therefore *Maimonides*, where he largely diſputes about the *truth* of *prophecies*, lays this down as a certain rule: *Si Propheta ſurrexerit, atque magna miracula aut prodigia fecerit & adlaboraverit falſitatis convincere Prophetiam* Moſis *M. N. iſtum non audimus, quia certò novimus prodigium præſtigiis aut incantationibus productum eſſe*, as *Vorſtius* renders him. *If a Prophet do never ſo great* miracles, *and ſeeks to convince* Moſes *of falſhood, we are not to hearken to him; for we know that they are not done by the power of God, but by the illuſions of the Devil.* And elſewhere he tells us, that if any one pretends to propheſy בשם עכוים *in the name of Idols, they muſt not ſo much as diſpute with him, nor anſwer him, nor deſire any ſigns or miracles from him; and if of himſelf he ſhews any, we are not to regard or mind them; for*, ſaith he, *whoever doth but doubt in his mind concerning them, he breaks that command, and thou ſhalt not hearken to the words of that Prophet.* So that the *doctrine* once eſtabliſhed, ought to be our moſt certain *rule*, according to which we muſt

De fundam. leg. c. 8. ſ. 7.

De Idololat. c. 5. ſ. 9.

Deut. 13. 3.

judge

judge of all *pretenders* to *miracles*, if their *design* be to draw men off from *God's* Word, we are not to hearken to what they either say or do.

4. Sect. 8. *The doctrine of those Prophets who seek not to introduce Idolatry, must not be measured by a strict conformity to the words of* Moses *his law, but to the main reason and intention of it.* The great *reason* of this is, because *God* did not intend the *Jews* should always *rest* in the *Pædagogy* of the *Ceremonial Law*, but sent them *Prophets* to train them up by *degrees*, and to fit them for a *state* of greater *perfection*; and therefore it would be very *unreasonable* to *judge* whether they were *true Prophets* or no, exactly by *that* which they came *gradually* to *wean* them *from*; which were all one, as to try one whether he were grown a *man* or no, by the *swadling clouts* he wore when he was a *child*. *God* tempered the *Ceremonial Law* much according to the *condition* and *capacity* of the *persons* it was prescribed to, and therefore the *sanctions* of it did immediately *respect* their temporary *concerns*; but we are not to think the *end* of that *dispensation* was to be merely a *Covenant* for the *Land* of *Promise*; but as the *Cherubims* in the *Temple* did always look towards the *Mercy-seat*, so did this whole *Oeconomy* look towards the *coming* of the *Messias*. But it was with the generality of the *Jews*, as it is with *Ignorant people*, who looking up to the *heavens*, cannot fansie the *stars* to be any bigger than they *seem* to them; but *Astronomers* by the *help* of their *Optick tubes* and *Telescopes*, do easily *discern* the just *magnitude* of them; so the *Jews* ordinarily thought there was no more in those *types* and *shadows*, than was *visibly represented* to them; but such as had the help of the *Divine Spirit* (the best *Telescope* to discern the *day-star* from on high with) could easily look through those *prospectives*, into the most glorious *mysteries* of the *Gospel* of *Jesus Christ*. These *types* being like *triangular Prismes*, that must be set in a due light and posture, before they can *represent* that great *variety* of *spiritual mysteries* which was contained in them. Now the great *office* of the *Prophets* was to administer *this light* to the people, and to direct them in those *excellent pieces* of *Perspective*, wherein by the help of a *Prophetick glass*, they might see the *Son* of *God* fully *represented* to their *view*. Besides this, the Prophetical *office* was a *kind* of *Chancery* to the *Mosaick Law*,

wherein the *Prophets* did interpret the *Pandects* of the *Law ex æquo & bono*, and frequently ſhewed in what *caſes God* did *diſpenſe* with the outward *letter* of it, to *exalt* the more the *inward ſence* and *reaſon* of it. Hence the *Prophets* ſeem many times to ſpeak *contemptibly* of the outward *preſcribed Ceremonies*, when their *intent* is not to *condemn* the *obſervation* of them, but to tell the people there were greater *things* which *God* looked at, than the outward *obſervation* of ſome Ceremonial *precepts*, and that *God* would never accept of that by way of *commutation*, for *real* and *internal goodneſs*. Hence the *Prophets* by their own *practice*, did *frequently* ſhew that the *Law* of *Moſes* did not ſo *indiſpenſibly oblige men*, but that *God* would *accept* of thoſe *actions* which were performed without the *regularity* required by the *Law* of *Moſes*; and thus he did of *ſacrificing* upon *high places*, not only before the building of the *Temple*, but ſometimes after, as he accepted of the *ſacrifice* of *Elijah* on Mount *Carmel*, even when *high places* were forbidden. Which the *Jews* are become ſo ſenſible of, that they grant that a *true Prophet* may ſometimes *command* ſomething to be *done* in *violation* of the *Law* of *Moſes*, ſo he doth not draw *people* to *Idolatry*, nor deſtroy the *obligation* of *Moſes* his *Law*. But this they reſtrain to לפי שעה ſomething done in *caſe of neceſſity*, and that it ſhould not paſs into a *precedent* or a *perpetual Law*; and therefore their rule is לפי שעה שומעינו לו בכל. *The Prophet was to be hearkened to in every thing he commanded in a caſe of neceſſity.* But by this it is clear that the *Prophets* were not to be *tryed* by the *letter* of the *Law* of *Moſes*, but by the *end* and the *reaſon* of it. Thus much I ſuppoſe will make it clear what *rules* the people had to try the *Prophets doctrine* by, without *miracles*.

Pſal. 50. 8. 51. 16.
Iſa. 1. 11, 13. 66. 3.
Jer. 7. 21, 22, 23.
1 King. 18. 38.
Vid. Jarchi in Deut. 18. 21. *Et Vorſt., ad Maim. de fund. c. 9. ſ. 5,6,7.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The Tryal of Prophetical Predictions and Miracles.

The great difficulty of the trying the truth of prophetical Predictions from Jer. 18. 7, 8, &c. *Some general* Hypotheses *premised for the clearing of it. The first concerns the grounds why Predictions are accounted an evidence of divine revelation. Three Consectaries drawn thence. The second, the manner of God's revelation of his will to the minds of the Prophets. Of the several degrees of prophecy. The third is, that God did not always reveal the internal purposes of his will unto the true Prophets. The grand question propounded, How it may be known when Predictions express God's decrees, and when only the series of causes. For the first several rules laid down.* 1. *When the prediction is confirmed by a present miracle.* 2. *When the things foretold exceed the probability of second causes.* 3. *When confirmed by God's oath.* 4 *When the blessings foretold are purely spiritual. Three rules for interpreting the prophecies which respect the state of things under the Gospel.* 5. *When all circumstances are foretold.* 6. *When many Prophets in several ages agree in the same predictions. Predictions do not express God's unalterable purposes, when they only contain comminations of judgments, or are predictions of temporal blessings. The case of the Ninevites,* Hezekiah, *and others, opened. Of repentance in God, what it implies. The Jewish objections about predictions of temporal blessings answered. In what cases miracles were expected from the Prophets: when they were to confirm the truth of their religion. Instanced in the Prophet at* Bethel, Elijah, Elisha *and* Moses *himself; whose divine authority that it was proved by miracles, is demonstrated against the modern Jews, and their pretences answered.*

THE next thing which the *rules* of *tryal* concerned, was the *predictions* of the *Prophets.* Concerning which *God* himself hath laid down this *general rule,* Deut. 18. 22. *When a Prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor* *Anſ.* 1.

nor come to paſs, that is the thing which the Lord hath not ſpoken, but the Prophet hath ſpoken it preſumptuouſly; thou ſhalt not be afraid of him. *Grotius* underſtands this place of the *Prophet*'s telling the *people* he would doe ſome *miracles* to confirm his *doctrine*; but, ſaith he, if thoſe *miracles* were not *done* as he *ſaid*, it was an evident *demonſtration* of a *falſe prophet*. It is certain it was ſo; for then his own *mouth* told him he was a *lying prophet*; but theſe *words* ſeem to refer, rather to ſomething *future* than *preſent*, and are therefore generally *underſtood* concerning the *truth* of *predictions*; which was a *matter* of very *difficult tryal*, in regard of the *goodneſs* or the *juſtice* of *God* ſo frequently *interpoſing* between the *prediction* and the *event*. That place which makes it ſo *difficult* to diſcern the truth of a *prediction* by the *event*, is *Jer.* 18. 7, 8, 9, 10. *At what inſtant I ſhall ſpeak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and deſtroy it; If that Nation againſt whom I have pronounced, turn from evil, I will repent of the evil I had thought to doe unto them; And at what inſtant I ſhall ſpeak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it doe evil in my ſight, that it obey not my voice, then will I repent of the good wherewith I ſaid I would benefit them.* By which place it ſeems clear, that even after the *predictions* of *Prophets*, *God* doth reſerve a *liberty* to *himſelf*, either to *repent* of the *evil* or the *good* that was *foretold* concerning any *people*; how then can the *fidelity* of a *Prophet* be diſcovered by the *event*, when *God* may *alter* the *event*, and yet the *Prophet* be a *true Prophet?* This being a *caſe* very *intricate* and *obſcure*, will call for the more *diligence* in the *unfolding* of it: In order to which, we ſhall firſt *premiſe* ſome general *Hypotheſes*, and then come to the particular *reſolution* of it. The general *Hypotheſes* will be concerning the *way* and *method* of *God's revealing future contingencies* to the *Prophets*, without which it will be *impoſſible* to reſolve the *particular emergent caſes* concerning *predictions*.

Sect. 2. 1 *Hypoth.* *The prediction of future events is no further an argument of a prophetick Spirit, than as the fore-knowledge of thoſe things is ſuppoſed to be out of the reach of any created underſtanding*, and therefore *God* challengeth this to *himſelf* in *Scripture*, as a peculiar *prerogative* of his *own, to declare the things that are to come*, and thereby manifeſts the *Idols* of the *Gentiles* to be no *Gods*, *becauſe*

because they could not shew to their worshippers the things to come, Isa. 44. 6, 7. From this *Hypothesis* these three Consectaries follow:

1. *That the events which are foretold, must be such as do exceed the reach of any created intellect*; for otherwise it could be no evidence of a *Spirit* of *true Prophecy*; so that the *foretelling* of such *events* as *depend* upon a *series* of *natural causes*, or such as though they are out of the *reach* of *humane understanding*, yet are not of the *diabolical*, or such *things* as *fall* out *casually* true, but by no *certain grounds* of *prediction*, can none of them be any argument of a *Spirit* of *Prophecy*.

2. *That where there were any other evidences, that the Prophet spake by Divine Revelation; there was no reason to wait the fulfilling of every particular Prophecy before he was believed as a Prophet.* If so, then many of *God*'s chiefest *Prophets* could not have been *believed* in their own *Generations*; because their *Prophecies* did reach so far beyond them, as *Isaiah*'s concerning *Cyrus*, the *Prophet* at *Bethel* concerning *Josias*: and all the *Prophecies* concerning the *captivity* and *deliverance* from it, must not have been *believed* till *fulfilled*, that is, *not believed at all*: for when *Prophecies* are *accomplished*, they are no *longer* the *objects* of *faith*, but of *sense*. Where then *God* gives other *evidences* of *Divine inspiration*, the *credit* of the *Prophet* is not *suspended* upon the *minute accomplishment* of every *event* foretold by him. Now it is evident there may be *particular Divine revelation* of other *things* besides *future contingencies*, so that if a *reason* may be given, why *events* once *foretold* may not come to pass, there can be no *reason* why the *credit* of any *Prophecy* should be *invalidated* on that *account*; because every *event* is not exactly *correspondent* to the *prediction*. It is most certain that whatever comes under *divine knowledge*, may be *divinely revealed*; for the *manifestation* which is caused by any *light*, may *extend* it self to all *things* to which that *light* is *extended*: but that *light* which the *Prophet* saw by was a *divine light*, and therefore might *equally extend* it *self* to all *kind* of *objects*; but because *future contingencies* are the most *remote* from *humane knowledge*, therefore the *foretelling* of these hath been *accounted* the great *evidence* of a *true Prophet*; but yet there may be a *knowledge* of other *things* in a lower *degree* than *future contingencies*, which may immediately *depend* upon *divine revelation*; and these are, 1. *Such*

1. *Such things which cannot be known by one particular man, but yet are certainly known by other men*; as the preſent knowledge of things done by perſons at a remote *diſtance* from
2 King. 5. 26. them: thus *Eliſha* knew what *Gehazi* did, when he *followed Naaman*; and thus the *knowledge* of the *thoughts* of another's *heart* depends upon *immediate divine revelation*, whereas every one may certainly *know* the *thoughts* of his own heart; and
1 Cor. 14. 25. therefore to ſome thoſe *things* may be *matters* of *ſenſe* or *evident demonſtration*, which to another may be a *matter* of *immediate revelation*.

2. *Such things as relate not to future contingencies, but are matters of faith exceeding the reach of humane apprehenſion*; ſuch things as may be *known* when *revealed*, but could never have been *found out* without *immediate revelation*; ſuch all the *myſteries* of our *religion* are, the *myſtery of the Trinity, Incarnation, Hypoſtatical union*, the *Death* of the *Son* of *God* for the *pardon of the ſins of mankind*. Now the *immediate revelation* of either of theſe *two ſorts* of *objects* ſpeaks as much a *truly Prophetical ſpirit* as the *prediction* of *future contingencies*. So that this muſt not be *looked* on as the *juſt* and *adequate rule to meaſure* a *ſpirit* of *Prophecy* by; becauſe the *ground* of judging a *Prophetical ſpirit* by *that*, is common with other *things without that*, ſeeing other *objects* are out of the *reach* of humane *underſtanding* as well as *future events*, and therefore the *diſcovery* of them muſt *immediately* flow from *divine revelation*.

3. *The revelation of future events to the underſtanding of a Prophet, is never the leſs immediate, although the event may not be correſpondent to the prediction.* So that if it be manifeſt that *God* immediately *reveal* ſuch *future contingencies* to a *Prophet*, he would be nevertheleſs a *true Prophet* whether thoſe *predictions* took *effect* or *no*. For a *true Prophet* is known by the *truth* of *divine revelation* to the *perſon* of the *Prophet*, and not by the *ſucceſs* of the *thing*, which, as is laid down in the *hypotheſis*, is no further an *evidence* of a *true Prophet*, than as it is an *argument à poſteriori* to prove *divine revelation* by. If then the *alteration* of *events* after *predictions* be *reconcilable* with the *truth* and *faithfulneſs* of *God*, there is no *queſtion* but it is with the *truth* of a *Prophetical ſpirit*, the *formality* of which lies in *immediate revelation*.

The

Sect. 3. 2. *Hypoth.*

The Prophets could not declare any thing more to the people than was immediately revealed unto themselves. What was presently *revealed*, so much they *knew*, and no *more*, because the *spirit* of *Prophecy* came upon them *per modum impressionis transeuntis*, as the *Schools* speak, and not *per modum habitus*; the *lumen propheticum* was in them, not as *lumen in corpore lucido*, but as *lumen in aëre*; and therefore the *light* of *revelation* in their *spirits* depended upon the immediate *irradiations* of the *Divine spirit*. The *Prophets* had not always a *power* to *prophesie* when they would themselves; and thence it is said, when they *prophesied*, that the *Word of the Lord came unto them*. And therefore the *Schools* determine, that a *Prophet* upon an *immediate revelation* did not know *omnia prophetabilia* (as they speak in their barbarous language) *all things* which *God might reveal*; the reason whereof *Aquinas* thus gives; *the ground*, saith he, *of the connexion of divers objects together is some common tie or principle which joyns them together; as charity or prudence is in moral vertues; and the right understanding of the principles of a science, is the ground why all things belonging to that science are understood; but now in Divine revelation, that which connects the objects of Divine revelation is God himself; now, because he cannot be fully apprehended by any humane intellect, therefore the understanding of a Prophet cannot comprehend all matters capable of being revealed, but only such as it pleaseth God himself freely to communicate to the Prophet's understanding by immediate revelation.* This is further evident by all those different *degrees* of *illumination and prophecy* which the *Jews* and other *Writers* speak so much of, *viz.* of *dreams* and *visions*, the *inspirations of the Holy Spirit*, the *gradus Mosaicus*, the *external voice*, &c. Now in every one of these *degrees* the *Prophet* could go no further than his *present revelation* extended; and therefore *Aquinas* determines, That the *understandings* of the *Prophets* were *instrumenta deficientia respectu principalis agentis*, *i. e.* that in *prophetical illumination* the mind of the *Prophet* was so moved by the *Spirit* of *God*, as an *instrument* in the *hand* of an *Artificer*, which bears no proportion with the *skill* of the *workman*: And therefore the *mind* of a *Prophet* is moved sometimes only to apprehend the *thing represented* (which they call *instinctus Divinus*, of which they say a *Prophet* may have no *certainty* whether it comes from *God* or no) sometimes

2. 2. *q.* 171. *art.* 2.—4.

2. 2. *q.* 173. *art.* 3.

times it is moved ſo far as to know certainly that this revelation is from *God* (this they call *lumen propheticum*;) ſometimes a *Prophet* may be moved to ſpeak thoſe *things* which he fully *underſtands*; ſo it was with moſt of the *true Prophets*; but ſometimes men may be moved to ſpeak that which they *underſtand* not, as is plain in *Caiaphas*, and probable in *Balaam*. Sometimes a thing was repreſented to the *fancy* of one without any poſſibility of *underſtanding* the meaning of thoſe *imaginary ſpecies*, as in *Pharaoh*'s and *Nebuchadnezzar*'s *dreams*; and to another may be given the *true judgment* of thoſe *motions* of *fancy* without the repreſentation of the *things* to them, as in *Joſeph* and *Daniel*. Now in theſe and many other different *impreſſions* of this *prophetical ſpirit*, the *Prophets*, to whom the *things* were *revealed*, could go no further than the *degree* of the *revelation* made to them did extend.

Sect. 4. 3. *Hypoth.* *God did not always reveal to the Prophets the internal counſels and decrees of his own will, but often only the method and ſeries of his providence in the adminiſtration of things in the world.* Which is the ground of that threefold *diſtinction* of *Prophecy* in the *Schools*, into *Prophetia prædeſtinationis*, *Prophetia præſcientiæ*, and *Prophetia comminationis*; which is taken from the *ordinary gloſs* upon *Matth.* 1. where they are thus explained; *the Prophecy of predeſtination* is, when the *event* depends wholly upon *God*'s *will*, without any *reſpect* to *ours*, as the *Prophecy* of the *Incarnation of Chriſt*; the *Prophecy* of *Preſcience* is of ſuch things as depend upon the *liberty* of *man*'s *will*; and the *Prophecy* of *Commination* only denotes *God*'s *denunciations* of *heavy judgments* againſt a people. But *Aquinas* doth better *reduce* the *two former* to *one*, and ſo the *ground* of the *difference* is to be fetched from the *different ways* whereby *God* knows things in the *World*; which is either as they are in *their cauſes*, and ſo they *note* the *order* and *ſeries* of *things* in the world, with the *mutual reſpects* and *dependencies* they have one upon *another*, and this *refers* to *God*'s *adminiſtration* of *things* in the *world*; or elſe *God* looks upon them as they are *in themſelves*, or according to his own *poſitive determinations* of them; and now in this *ſence* they are *unalterable*; but in the other they are not; but *God* may alter thoſe *reſpects* of *things* when he pleaſeth. Now though this *different manner* of *knowledge* can never be *conceived ſeparate* from one *another* in the *Divine underſtanding*,

derstanding, yet in the *revelation* made to the *mind* of a *Prophet*, they may be *disjoyned* from *each other*, because *God* doth not always *reveal* things in the *highest degree* to the *Prophets*; for no free Agent doth always *act* as far as he can. And therefore *prophetical revelation* is sometimes a *representation* of *God's internal decrees*, and then they always take *effect*; and sometimes only the *order of causes* and *effects*, and they may admit of an *alteration*, and the *Prophecy* nevertheless be *true*, because then it referred only to the *series* of *causes* in the world according to which the *events* would follow if *God* himself did not *interpose*. These things being thus premised, we come to particular *resolutions*, which must arise from the *evidences* that may be given when *prophetical predictions* did express *God's internal purpose* and *decree*, and when only *the order of the causes in the world*; for in these latter it is apparent that *events* might not answer *predictions*, and yet the *Prophet* be a *true Prophet*: which is a matter of *greater difficulty*, viz. to find out the exact *differences* of these *two*, till the *event* hath made it apparent which came from *God's unalterable purpose*, and which not. But though it be a *subject* little spoken to either by *Jewish* or *Christian Writers*, yet we are in hopes there may be some such clear *notes* of *distinction* discovered between them, even *à priori*, which may sufficiently clear *God's faithfulness*, and the *Prophet's truth*, though the *event* be not always *correspondent* to the *words* of a *prediction*.

I begin then with the *evidences* that may be given when *predictions* do flow from *internal purpose and decree*. *Sect.* 5.

1. *Every prediction confirmed by a present miracle, doth not express merely the order of causes, but the determinations of God's will*, because there can be no sufficient *reason* given why the *order* of *causes* in *nature* should be *altered* to *express* the *dependences* of *things* on *each other*; for herein a *miracle* would rather tend to *weaken* than *strengthen faith*, because the *end* of the *miracle* would be to *confirm* their *faith* as to *events* following upon their *causes*; but now the *medium* used for that *end* seems to prove the *contrary*, viz. That *God* can *alter* the *series* of *causes* when he *pleases* himself, by *working miracles*, and therein going contrary to the *course* of *nature*; and therefore a *miracle* seems to be a very *incongruous argument* in this, because *its self* is an *evidence* that *may be*, which it comes to prove *shall*

not be. But when *Prophets* come to declare the *internal purposes* of the *will* of *God* concerning *future contingencies*, no *argument* can be more *ſuitable* to *demonſtrate* the *truth* of what is ſpoken, than the *working* of a *preſent miracle*, for this demonſtrates to the ſenſes of men, that however *unlikely* the *event* may be to them which is *foretold*, yet with *God* all things are *poſſible*, and that it is very *unlikely God* would ſend ſuch a *meſſenger* to declare a *falſhood*, whom he *entruſted* with ſo great a *power* as that of *working miracles.* Thus it was in that *remarkable Prophecy* concerning *Joſias* by the *man* of
1 King. 13. 3. *God* at *Bethel*, 260 years before his *birth*, which though it were to come to paſs ſo long after, *God* confirmed it by a *ſign*, which was *the renting of the Altar, and the pouring out of the aſhes upon it, and the withering of* Jeroboam's *hand.* We cannot therefore in reaſon think that *God* would ſet ſo clear a *ſeal* to any *deed* which he did intend himſelf to *cancel* afterward.

2. *Predictions expreſs God's inward purpoſe, when the things foretold do exceed all probabilities of ſecond cauſes*; in which caſe though thoſe words of *Tertullian* ſeem very harſh, *credo quia impoſſibile*: yet taking that *impoſſibility* as relating to *ſecond cauſes*, and the ground of *faith* to be ſome *divine prediction*, we ſee what *reaſon* there may be for them: For the more *unlikely* the *thing* is to be *effected* by *ſecond cauſes*, the greater *evidence* is it, that the *Prophets* in *foretelling* it did not *reſpect* the mere *order* of *things* in the *world*, but the *unalterable counſels* of the *will* of *God*, which therefore would certainly have their *timely accompliſhments.* When therefore any *Prophets* did foretell things above the reach of *natural cauſes*, and thoſe *things* did not *come* to *paſs*, it was a *certain evidence* of a *falſe Prophet*, as the *contrary* was of a *true one*; for none could know ſo long before-hand ſuch *things* as were above all *humane power*, but ſuch to whom *God* himſelf, who alone was *able* to *effect* them, did *reveal* and *communicate* the *knowledge* of them. And hence we ſee in *Scripture* thoſe *predictions* which have ſeemed to carry the greateſt *improbabilities* with them, have had the moſt *punctual accompliſhments*, as the *Iſraelites* returning out of *Ægypt*
Gal. 3. 17. at the end of the 430 years; their *deliverance* by *Cyrus* after the *captivity* in *Babylon*, which ſeemed ſo improbable
Iſa. 44. 25, 26, 28. a thing, that when *God* ſpeaks of it, he uſhers it in with this Preface, *That he fruſtrateth the tokens of the lyers, and maketh*

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the deviners mad, but confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers, that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited, &c. The more *unlikely* then the thing was to come to *pass*, the greater *evidence* there was in so clear a *prophecy* of it so long before (above 100 years) and so exact a *fulfilling* of it afterwards precisely at the expiring of the LXX years from the *first Captivity*.

Predictions concerning future events, which are confirmed by an oath from God himself, do express the immutable determinations of God's will. For which we have the greatest *assurance* we can desire from that *remarkable expression* of the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*, Heb. 6. 17, 18. *Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lye, we might have a strong consolation*, &c. Wherein the *Apostle obviates* and *removes* all *doubts* and *misprisions*, lest *God* after the *declaring* of his *will* should alter the *event foretold* in it, and that he doth, both by *shewing* that *God* hath made an *absolute promise*, and withal to prevent all *doubts*, lest some *tacite condition* might hinder *performance*, he tells us that *God* had annexed his *oath* to it, which two things were the most undoubted evidences of the *immutability* of *God's counsel*. The word Ψεύδω, here used, doth in Scripture often note the *frustrating* of mens *hopes* and *expectations*; so it is used, *Hab.* 3. 17. Ψεύσεται ἔργον ἐλαίας, we render it the *labour of the Olive shall fail*. So Hos. 9. 2. καὶ ὁ οἶνος ψεύσεται αὐτῆς, *and the new wine shall fail in her*. Thus the meaning here is, that by *two immutable things* in which it is *impossible* that *God* should *frustrate* the *expectations* of men, or *alter* the *events* of *things* after he had declared them. For *God's oath* is an evident *demonstration* of the *immutability* of his *will* in all *predictions* to which this is *annexed*, and doth fully *exclude* that which the *Scripture* calls *repenting* in *God*, that is, *doing otherwise than the words did seem to express*, because of some *tacite conditions* understood in them. So we find *Psal.* 89. 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36. *If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail; my Covenant will I not break; nor alter the thing that is* Sect. 6. 3.

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gone out of lips. Once have I ſworn by my holineſs, that I will not lye unto David. His ſeed ſhall endure for ever, and his throne as the Sun before me. Wherein we ſee what way God takes to aſſures us of the immutability of his *Covenant* with his people, by the *oath* which he adjoyns to his *promiſes*; whereby *God* doth moſt fully expreſs the *unalterable determinations* of his own *will*, in that he *ſwears* by his own *holineſs* that he would not lye unto *David*, i. e. that he would *faithfully* perform what he had *promiſed* to him. And therefore *Tertullian* well ſaith, *Beati ſumus quorum cauſa Deus jurat, ſed miſeri & deteſtabiles ſi ne juranti quidem credimus.* It is happy for us believing creatures, that *God* ſtoops ſo *low* as to *confirm his Covenant* with an *oath*; but it will be ſad and miſerable for ſuch as dare not venture their *faith* upon it, when *God* hath annexed his *oath* unto it. It is thought by *expoſitors*, that there is a peculiar *emphaſis* in thoſe *words*, אחת נשבעתי *Once have I ſworn*, thereby noting the *irrevocable nature of God's* oath, that there is no need of *repetition* of it as among men, becauſe when once *God* ſwears by *himſelf* it is the higheſt *demonſtration* that no *conditions* whatever ſhall alter his declared *purpoſe*. And therefore the *Council* of *Toledo* well explains the different *nature* of *God's Oath* and his *repentance* in *Scriptures*; *Jurare namque Dei eſt à ſe ordinata nullatenus convellere; pœnitere vero eadem ordinata cum voluerit immutare*; *God* is ſaid to *ſwear* when he *binds himſelf abſolutely* to *performance*: and to *repent*, when *things* fall out *contrary* to the *declaration* of *God's will* concerning them; for ſo it muſt be underſtood to be only *mutatio ſententiæ*, and not *conſilii*, that the *alteration* may be only in the *things*, and not in the *eternal purpoſe of God.* But ſince it is evident in *Scripture*, that many *predictions* do imply ſome *tacite conditions*, and many *declarations* of *God's will* do not *expreſs* his *internal purpoſes*, it ſeemed *neceſſary* in thoſe *things* which *God* did *declare* to be the *irrevocable purpoſes* of his *will*, there ſhould be ſome peculiar *mark* and *character* ſet upon them for the *confirmation* of his *peoples faith*, and this we find to be the *annexing* an *oath* to his *promiſes*. Thus it is in that grand *Inſtrument* of *Peace* between *God* and his *people*, the *Covenant* of *Grace*, wherein *God* was pleaſed ſo far to *ſtrengthen* the *faith* of his *people* in it, that he *ratifies* the *articles* of *peace* therein contained, but eſpecially the *Act* of *Grace*,

Conc. Toled. 8. c. 2.

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on his own part with an *oath*, thereby to *assure* them it was never his purpose to *repeal* it, nor to *fail* of *performance* in it. For we are not to think that an *Oath* lays any greater *obligation* upon *God* for *performance*, than the mere *declaration* of his *will*; it being a part of *immutable justice*, and consequently *necessarily implyed* in the *Divine nature* to perform *promises* when once made; but *God's Oath* respects *us* and not *himself*, *viz.* that it might be a *testimony* unto *us* that *God's will* thereby declared is his *eternal* and *unchangeable will*, and so the *mercies* thereby *promised* are *sure mercies*; such as are ἀμεταμέλητα *without any repentance on God's part.* Isa. 55. 3.

Predictions made by the Prophets concerning blessings merely spiritual, do express God's internal purpose, and therefore must have their certain accomplishment in the time prefixed by the Prophets. Sect. 7. 4.

The grand *reason* of this *Proposition*, is, that the *bestowing* of *blessings* merely *spiritual*, doth immediately *flow* from the *grace* and *favour* of *God*, and depend not upon *conditions* on our *part*, as procuring *causes* of them, and therefore there can be no *account* given why *God* should *suspend* the *performance* of such *promises*, which would not more *strongly* have held why he should not have *made* any such *promises* at all. And therefore when we see that *notwithstanding* the *highest demerits*, *God* made such free *promises*, we can have no *reason* to think that any other *demerits interposing* between the *promises* and *performance*, should hinder the *accomplishment* of them: unless it be *inserted* in the *promises* themselves, which is contrary to the *nature* of *free promises*: Upon this ground all the *promises* relating to the *Gospel state*, and to the *Covenant* of *grace* therein contained, must have their *due accomplishment* in the *time* and *manner prefixed* by the *Prophets*: and therefore the *Jews* are miserably *blind* when they *suppose* the *reason* why the *promise* of the *Messias* is yet *deferred* after so long expectation of him, is, the *sins* of their *people*; for this seems to suppose that *God's promise* of the *Messias* did depend upon their *own righteousness* and *worthiness* above all other *people*, which if it doth, they are *like* to be the most *miserable* and *desperate people* the world hath: and besides, if *God's intuition* of *sin* makes him *deferr* the coming of the *Messias*, his *foresight* of *sin* would have *hindered* him from

from ever *promiſing* a *Meſſias* to come: but this was ſo far from being a *hindrance* of *God's* promiſe, that the main *end* of the
Dan. 9. 24. *coming* of the *Meſſias* was *to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to make an end of ſin, and to bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs.* And we ſee where-ever the *Prophets* inſiſt on the *Covenant of grace*, the great promiſe contained in it is *the bloting out of tranſgreſſions*, and *remembring ſins no more*, and that merely on the *account* of *God's free love* and for his own *name's ſake:* This can be no *reaſon* then why *predictions* concerning *ſpiritual bleſſings* ſhould not have their *exact accompliſhment*, becauſe there can be no bar againſt *free Love*, and the *beſtowing* of ſuch *mercies* which do ſuppoſe the greateſt *unworthineſs* of them, as *Goſpel bleſſings* do.

Sect. 8. The great *difficulty* lies in *explaining* the *Prophetical phraſes* concerning the *Goſpel ſtate*, which ſeem to intimate a greater *advancement* and *flouriſhing* of *peace* and *holineſs* therein, than hath as yet been *ſeen* in the *Chriſtian world*; which gives the *Jews* the greater *occaſion* to *imagine* that the *ſtate* ſo much *ſpoken* of by the *Prophets*, is not yet *eſtabliſhed* in the world. But all the *difficulty* herein ariſeth from the want of *conſideration* of the *Idiotiſms* of the *Prophetical language*, eſpecially where it *reſpects* the *ſtate* of *things* under the *Goſpel*, concerning which, we may obſerve theſe following *rules*.

1. *The Prophets under the Old Teſtament, when they ſpeak of things to come to paſs in the New, do ſet them forth by the repreſentation of ſuch things as were then in uſe among themſelves*; thus the ſpiritual *worſhip* of the *Goſpel* is *propheſied* of, under the *notion* of the *legal worſhip* among the *Jews*; the *converſion of Ægypt* to the *Goſpel*, is foretold *Iſaiah* 19. 19, 21. by the ſetting up of an *Altar*, and *offering ſacrifice to the Lord*; and the *Converſion of the Gentiles* in general, by the *offering up of incenſe*, Mal. 1. 11. and the *ſervice* of *God* under the *Goſpel*, is ſet forth by *going up to* Jeruſalem, *and keeping the feaſt of Tabernacles there*, Zach 14. 16 and the *plentiful effuſion of the ſpirit of God in the miraculous gifts* which attended the *preaching* of the *Goſpel*, is ſet forth by the *Prophet*, Joel 2. 28. by *Propheſying, and dreaming dreams, and ſeeing viſions*; not that theſe things ſhould really be under *Goſpel times*; but that the *Prophets* meaning might be the better *underſtood* by thoſe he *ſpake* unto, he ſets forth the great *meaſure*

measure of *gifts* and *Gospel light* under those things which were accounted as the highest *attainments* among *themselves*. So the great *measure* and *degree* of *holiness* which was to be under *Gospel times*, is set forth by the *Prophet Zachary*, Zach. 14. 20. by the placing of the *motto* which was among the *Jews* only upon the *High Priest's forehead*, that this should be so common under the *Gospel*, that even *the bells of the horses should bear it*, *i. e.* those things which seem most remote from a spiritual *use*, should be *devoted* to *it*, as the *bells* were, which were commonly *hanged* upon *their war-horses* in those mountainous Countries; and in the latter part of that verse, the *height* and *progress* of *Gospel holiness* is described under that *phrase*, *that the pots in the Lords house should be as bowls before the Altar*, *i. e.* should be advanced from a *lower* and more ignoble *service*, to a higher and more *spiritual* degree of *holiness*. Now the *Jews* when they *observe* these and many other *Prophetical passages* relating to the *time* of the *Messias* to run in the *old strain* of the *Law*, they presently *conclude* that the *Messias* must not *innovate* any thing concerning their *way* of *worship*, but only be some great *Prince* to give them temporal *deliverances*, and so expound all these *texts* in a *litgral sence*, which were only expressed in such a *strain*, the better to *help* the *capacities* of those they spake them to.

Things absolutely foretold to come to pass in Gospel times in a general manner, are to be understood comparatively in reference to what was before. 2. For when the *measure* of either *grace* or *knowledge* was so far above what was then among the *Jews*, that there was scarce any *proportion* between them, the *Prophets* made *use* of such *expressions* to set it *forth* by, which might raise up the *dull apprehension* of the *Jews* to conceive the just measure and fulness of it. Thus when the *Prophets* fore-tell the grand *increase* of *spiritual knowledge* in *Gospel times*, they do it in this *phrase*, *they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me from the least to the greatest*, Jer. 31. 33. Where it was far from the *Prophet's* meaning to exclude all *use* of *teaching* under the *Gospel*, (which is contrary to the *end* of all the *Ordinances* of the *Gospel*) but because *teaching* doth commonly *suppose* great *Ignorance*, he sets forth the *abundance* of *knowledge* which should be then, by the *exclusion* of that

which doth *imply* it. So when it is ſaid that *they ſhall all be taught of God*, the meaning is not, that every *one* that *lives* in the *Goſpel ſtate*, ſhould be thus effectually *taught* by the *Spirit of God*; but that the *number* of ſuch under the *Goſpel*, ſhould ſo far exceed thoſe under the *Law*, that they could hardly *apprehend* the *diſproportion* between *them*, unleſs it had been ſet forth in ſo *large* an *expreſſion*. Which leads me to the next *rule*.

3. *Things foretold as univerſally or indefinitely to come to paſs under the Goſpel, are to be underſtood as to the duty of all, but as to the event only of God's choſen people.* Thus when there is ſo great *peace propheſied* to be in *Goſpel times*, that then Iſa. 2. 4. *men ſhould beat their ſwords into plow-ſhares, and ſpears into* 11. 6, 7. *pruning-hooks; that the Wolf ſhould lie down with the Lamb, and Leopard with the Kid; that Nation ſhould not lift up ſword againſt Nation, nor learn war any more*; with many others to the ſame purpoſe; all theſe *ſpeeches* are to be underſtood of what the *nature* and *deſign* of the *Goſpel* tends to, and what is the *duty* of all that *profeſs* it, and what would *effectually* be in the *Chriſtian world*, did *all* that *profeſs* the *Chriſtian doctrine*, heartily *obey* the *dictates* of it; and ſo far as the *Goſpel* doth *prevail* upon any, it ſo far *cicurates* their *wild* and *unruly* natures, that of *furious Wolves* they become innocent *Lambs*, and of *raging Lions*, *tender Kids*; ſo far from *hurting* and *injuring others*, that they dare not *entertain* any *thoughts* of ill *will* or *revenge* towards their *greateſt enemies*. And thus we may ſee, that notwithſtanding the ſeeming *repugnancies* of the *Prophecies* of the *Old Teſtament* concerning the *ſtate* of the *New*, with the *events* which have been obſerved in it, yet that all thoſe *predictions* which concerned the *beſtowing* of the *ſpiritual bleſſings* which concerned the *Goſpel ſtate*, have had their *punctual accompliſhment* in the *ſence* they were intended.

Sect. 9. 4. *Prediction's concerning future events where not only the thing its ſelf is foretold but the ſeveral circumſtances of perſons, time, and place enumerated, are to have their due accompliſhment, and conſequently expreſs God's inward purpoſes.* For thoſe *promiſes* or *comminations* which are capable of *alteration* by ſome *tacite conditions* implyed in them, do moſt commonly *run* in *general terms*; or elſe are ſpoken by way of *immediate addreſs*

address to the *persons* concerned in *order* to the *stirring* them up the more to the *duty God* aims at by those *comminations*; as when *Jonas* limited the *Ninevites destruction* to *forty days*. But when *Prophecies* are recorded, not by way of *commination* but mere *prediction*, and particular *circumstances* set down, it stands to *reason* that such *Prophecies* must have their certain *accomplishment*; and that *first*, because *God* by setting down the *circumstances* would give them greater *evidences* that the *predictions* came from *himself*; as when the *Prophet* at *Bethel* not only *foretold* the *destruction* of the *Altar* there, but particularly named the *man* that should do it, viz. *Josias*. So when *God* by *Isaiah* called *Cyrus* by name, it was doubtless a great *confirmation* to *them*, that the *deliverance* of the *Jews*, should be by that *person*. *Secondly*, because these *circumstances* are intended for *Landmarks* to know the *certainty* of the *accomplishment* of the *Prophecy*. For when they find the *circumstances* fall out *exactly* according to *prediction*, they have no *ground* to *question* the *accomplishment* of the *substance* of the *Prophecy*. And hence it was that in the grand *Prophecy* of the coming of the *Messias* all particular *circumstances* were so long before *foretold*. The first *dawning* of his *day* being to *Adam* after his *fall*, when the nature he should be *born* of was foretold, *viz.* not *Angelical* but *humane*, of the *seed* of the *woman*. To *Abraham* it was further revealed of what *Nation of mankind*, viz. from his *posterity*; to *Jacob* at *what time*, when the *Scepter should be departed from* Judah; and from what *tribe*, viz. *Judah*; to *David* of what *Family* in that *tribe*, viz. *his own*; to *Isaiah* of what *Person* in that *Family*, a *Virgin*; to *Micah* in what *place*, viz. *Bethlehem*; and to *Daniel*, at what precise *time*, toward the *expiring of his seventy weeks*; which according to the most probable *computation* of them did *commence* from the *seventh year* of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, and so the 490 *years* expired near upon our *Saviour's passion*. Now certainly the particular *enumeration* of all these *circumstances* spoken of so long before, and *falling out so exactly*, could not but give the *greatest conviction* and *evidence*, that our *blessed Saviour* was that person so much spoken of by the *Prophets*, in whom all these several *lines* did meet as in their *center*.

5. Lastly, *Predictions then express divine purposes when many Prophets in several ages concur in the same predictions*; because it is hardly seen but all those *tacite conditions* which are supposed in general *promises* or *comminations* may be *altered* in *different ages*; but when the *conditions alter*, and the *predictions continue* the *same*, it is a *stronger evidence* it is some *immutable counsel* of *God* which is expressed in those *predictions*. And in this case one *prediction* confirms the *foregoing*, as the *Jews* say of *Prophets*; *One Prophet that hath the testimony of another Prophet, is supposed to be true*; but it must be with this *supposition*, that the other *Prophet* was before *approved* to be a *true Prophet*. Now both these meet in the *Prophecies* concerning our *Saviour*; for to *him* bear all the *Prophets witness*; and in their several *ages* they had several *things* revealed to them concerning him; and the *uniformity* and *perfect harmony* of all these *several Prophecies* by *persons* at so great *distance* from *each other*, and being of *several interests and imployments*, and in *several places*, yet all giving *light* to each *other*, and *exactly meeting* at last in the *accomplishment*, do give us yet a *further* and *clearer evidence* that all those several *beams* came from the same *Sun*, when all those scattered *rays* were at last *gathered* into one *body* again at the *appearance* of the *Sun* of *righteousness* in the *world*.

Sect. 10. Thus have we now cleared when *predictions* are expressive of *God's internal purposes*; by *observation* of which rules we may easily *resolve* the other *part* of the *difficulty* when they only *express* the *series* and *dependencies* of *things* which would have their *issue* and *accomplishment* if *God* by his *immediate hand of providence* did not cut off the *entail* of *effects* upon their *natural causes*. Now as to these *Prophecies* which concern things considered in *themselves*, and not *precisely* as they are in the *counsel of God*, we are to observe these rules.

1. *Comminations of judgments to come do not in themselves speak the absolute futurity of the event, but do only declare what the persons to whom they are made are to expect, and what shall certainly come to pass, unless God by his mercy interpose between the threatning and the event.* So that *comminations* do speak only the *debitum pœnæ* and the necessary *obligation* to *punishment*; but

but therein *God* doth not *bind* up himself as he doth in *absolute promises*; the *reason* is because *comminations* confer no *right* to any, which *absolute promises* do; and therefore *God* is not bound to *necessary performance* of what he *threatens*. Indeed the *guilt*, or *obligation* to *punishment* is *necessary*, where the *offence* hath been *committed* to which the *threatning* was *annexed*; but the *execution* of that *punishment* doth still *depend* upon *God's arbitrarious will*, and therefore he may *suspend* or *remove* it upon *serious addresses* made to *himself* in order to it. For since *God* was pleased not to take the present *forfeiture* of the *first* grand *transgression*, but made such a *relaxation* of that *penal Law*, that *conditions* of *pardon* were *admittable*, notwithstanding *sentence passed* upon the *malefactors*, there is strong *ground* of *presumption* in *humane nature* that *God's forbearance* of *mankind* notwithstanding *sin*, doth suppose his *readiness* to *pardon offenders* upon their *repentance*, and therefore that all *particular threatnings* of *judgments* to *come* do suppose *incorrigibleness* in those they are pronounced against: Upon which the *foundation* of *hope* is *built*, that if *timely repentance* do *intervene*, *God* will *remove* those *judgments* which are *threatned* against them.

And this was *certainly* the case of the *Ninevites* upon *Jonas* his preaching among them. For when the *threatning* was so *peremptory*, *Yet forty days*, *and* Nineve *shall be destroyed*, all the *hope* they could have of *pardon* must be from the general *persuasions* of men's *souls* of *God's readiness* to remove *judgments* upon *repentance*. For otherwise there had been no place for any thing but *despair*, and not the least *encouragement* to *supplicate* the *mercy* of *God*, which we see they *did* in a most *solemn manner* after they were *convinced* these *comminations* came from *God* himself by the mouth of his *Prophet*. Some think that *Jonas* together with the *threatning* of *judgment* did intermix *exhortations* to *repentance*; but we can find no *probability* at all for that on these two accounts; first, *Jonas* then would not have been so *unwilling* to have *undertaken* this *message*; for as far as we can see, the *harshness* of it was the main *reason* he sought to have avoided it by flying to *Tarshish*. Secondly, *Jonas* would have had no *pretence* at all for his *anger* and *displeasure* at *God's* pardoning *Nineve*; which is most probably conceived to have been, because the *Ninevites* might

Sect. 111

Jonah 3. 4.

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now *ſuſpect* him to be no *true Prophet*, becauſe the *event* anſwered not his *prediction*. Now there had been no *reaſon* at all for this, if he had mixed *promiſes* together with his *threatnings*; for then *nothing* would have *fallen* out *contrary* to his own *predictions*. And therefore it ſeems evident that the *meſſage Jonas* was ſent with, was only the *commination* of their ſpeedy *ruine*, which *God* did on *purpoſe* to *awaken* them the *ſooner*, and with the greater *earneſtneſs* to *repentance*, when the *judgment* was denounced in ſo *peremptory* a *manner*; although it
Jonah 4. 2. ſeems *Jonas* had before ſuch *apprehenſions* of the *merciſull nature of God* and his *readineſs* to *pardon*, that he might ſuppoſe *God's intention* by this ſevere *denunciation* of *judgment*, might be only to take *occaſion* upon their *repentance* to ſhew his *goodneſs* and *bounty* to them. But this was no part of his *inſtructions*, which he durſt not go beyond in his *preaching*, whatever his *private opinion* might be; for the *Prophets* were to utter no more in their *preaching* or particular *meſſages* than *was* in their *commiſſion*, and were not to *mix* their own *words* with the *Word of the Lord*.

Sect. 12. And by this we may further underſtand the *denunciation* of
Iſa. 38. 1. *death* to *Hezekiah* by the *Prophet* Iſaiah, *Set thy houſe in order, for thou ſhalt die and not live.* I queſtion not but the *Prophet* revealed to *Hezekiah* as much as *God* had *revealed* to him
Vates, l.1. c.6. (for to ſay as *Molinæus* doth, that the *Prophet* ſpake theſe *words* of his own *head*, before he fully underſtood *God's mind*, is very *harſh* and *incongruous*) but *God* might at firſt *diſcover* to *Iſaiah* not his *internal purpoſe*, but what the *nature* of the diſeaſe would bring him to (unleſs his own *immediate hand of providence interpoſed*) which *meſſage* he would have *Iſaiah* carry to *Hezekiah* for the *tryal* of his *faith*, and *exciting* him to the more lively *acts* of *grace*, and for a further *demonſtration* of *God's goodneſs* to him in *prolonging* his *life* beyond humane *probability* and the *courſe* of *ſecond cauſes*. Now what *repugnancy* is there to the *truth* and *faithfulneſs* of *God*, that *God* ſhould *conceal* from his *Prophets* in their *meſſages* the *internal purpoſes* of his *will*, and in order to the doing *good* to *men* ſhould only reveal what would certainly have *come* to *paſs* unleſs *himſelf* had otherwiſe *determined* it. And thus the repentance which is attributed to *God* in reference to theſe *denunciations* of *judgments*, is far from *importing* any *real mutation* in the

the *internal purpoſes* of *God* (a rock ſome have ſplit themſelves upon) but it only ſignifies the outward *changing* of the *Scene* towards *men*, and *acting* otherwiſe than the *words* of the *Prophets* did ſeem to *import*; and all the *alteration* is in the outward diſcovery of his will, which is certainly far from being any *colluſion* in *God*: Unleſs we muſt ſuppoſe *God* ſo bound up, that he hath no liberty of uſing his own *methods* for *bringing* men to *repentance*, or for *tryal* of his *peoples graces*, but muſt in every *inſtance* of his *Word* declare nothing but his own *internal purpoſes*, which is contrary to the general *method* of *God*'s dealing with the *world*, which is, to *govern* men by his *own Laws*, and thereby to *awaken* them to *duty*, and deterr from *ſin* by his annexed *threatnings*, without *revealing* any thing of his *internal purpoſes* concerning the *ſtate* and *condition* of any particular *perſons* at *all*; which *threatnings* of his, though *pronounced* with the greateſt ſeverity, do not ſpeak *God*'s *inward reſolutions* as to any particular *perſon*, but what all muſt *expect* if they continue *impenitent* and *incorrigible*. For the only *condition* implyed in theſe *threatnings* being *repentance*, it neceſſarily follows, that where that is *wanting*, theſe *hypothetical comminations* are *abſolute predictions* of what ſhall certainly come to paſs on all thoſe who are deſtitute of the *condition ſuppoſed* in them.

Sect. 13. So that where any *comminations* are *pronounced* by any in a *prophetical way* concerning any perſon or people, and no *alteration* happen at all in them, but they continue *impenitent* and *incorrigible*, there the not coming of them to *paſs* may be a *token* of a *falſe Prophet*. For in this caſe the only *tacite condition implyed* in theſe *threatning Prophecies* is ſuppoſed to be *wanting*, and ſo the *comminations* muſt be *underſtood* as *abſolute predictions*: Now in thoſe *comminations* in *Scripture*, which are *abſolutely expreſſed*, but *conditionally underſtood*, we find ſomething *interpoſing*, which we may rationally ſuppoſe was the very *condition underſtood*. As *Abimelech*'s *reſtoring* of *Sarah* was the *ground* why the *ſentence* of *death* after it was *denounced*, was not *executed* upon him: So *Ahab*'s *humiliation*, *Hezekiah* his *earneſt prayer*, the *Ninevites repentance*, all *interpoſed* between *ſentence* and *execution*, whereby we may be fully ſatisfied of the *reaſon* why theſe *denunciations* did not take *effect*: But where the perſons *continue* the *ſame* after *threat-*

Gen. 20. 7.

1 King. 21. 19.

threatnings that they were *before*, there is no *reaſon* why the *ſentence* ſhould be *ſuſpended*, unleſs we ſhould ſuppoſe it to be a mere *effect* of the *patience* and *long-ſuffering* of *God*, *leading men to repentance and amendment of life*: Which is the *ground* the *Jews* give, why the not *fulfilling* of *denunciations* of *judgment* was never *accounted ſufficient* to *prove* a man a *falſe Prophet*; to which purpoſe theſe *words* of *Maimonides* are obſervable in his *Jeſude Thorah*, where he treats particularly on the *ſubject* of *Prophecies*: *If a Prophet foretell ſad things, as the death of any one, or famine, or war, or the like; if theſe things come not to paſs, he ſhall not be accounted a falſe Prophet; neither let them ſay, Behold he hath foretold, and it comes not to paſs; for our bleſſed God is ſlow to anger, and rich in mercy, and repenteth of the evil; and it may be that they repent, and God may ſpare them, as he did the Ninevites, or deferr the puniſhment, as he did* Hezekiah's. Thus we ſee that *prophetical comminations* do not expreſs *God's internal purpoſes*, and therefore the *event* may not come to paſs, and yet the *Prophet* be a *true Prophet*.

De fund. legis, cap. 10. *ſ.* 6.

Sect. 14. 2. *Predictions concerning temporal bleſſings, do not always abſolutely ſpeak the certainty of the event, but what God is ready to doe, if they to whom they are made continue faithfull to him*: For which we have ſufficient ground from that place of *Jeremiah* 18. 9, 10. *At what inſtant I ſhall ſpeak concerning a Kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it doe evil in my ſight, that it obey not my voice, then will I repent of the good wherewith I ſaid I would benefit them.* So *Iſaiah* 1. 19, 20. *If ye be willing and obedient, ye ſhall eat the good of the Land; but if ye refuſe and rebell, ye ſhall be devoured with the ſword; for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.* Whereby we ſee it evident, that all *promiſes* of *temporal bleſſings* are not to be taken *abſolutely*, but with the *condition* of *obedience*. But this the *Jews* can by no means *digeſt*, whoſe *rule* is, that all *prophecies* of *good things* to *come* muſt neceſſarily *come* to *paſs*, or he was no *true Prophet* who ſpake them: For, ſaith *Maimon. Whatever good thing God hath promiſed, although it be promiſed under a condition, he never revokes it; and we never find that God repented him of any good thing promiſed, but in the deſtruction of the firſt Temple, when God had promiſed to the righteous, they ſhould not die with the wicked; but he repented him of his words.* But

Ibid. ſ. 7, 8.

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it is very plain to any one that considers the *Jewish Interpretations* of *Scripture*, that in them they have always an *eye* to *themselves*, and will be sure not to *understand* those *Scriptures* which seem to *thwart* their own *interest*, as is most apparent in the *present case*; for the *grand reason* why the *Jews* insist so much on the *punctual accomplishment* of all *promises* of *good* to be the *sign* of a *true Prophet* is, to *uphold* their own *interest* in those *temporal blessings* which are *propheſied* of concerning *them* in the *old Testament*; although one would think the *want* of *correspondency* in the *event* in reference to *themselves*, might make them a *little* more *tender* of the *honour* of those *Prophecies* which they acknowledge to be *divine*; and have appeared to be so in nothing *more* than the full *accomplishment* of all those *threatnings* which are *denounced* against them for their *disobedience*, even by the mouth of *Moses* himself, *Deut.* 28. from the 15th. to the end. Can any thing be more *plain* and *evident*, than that the *enjoyment* of all the *privileges* conferred upon them, did depend upon the *condition* of their *continuing faithfull* to *God's Covenant?* The only place of Scripture produced by them with any *plausibility* is that, *Jer.* 28. 9. *The Prophet which propheſieth of peace, when the word of the Prophet shall come to pass, then shall the Prophet be known that the Lord hath truly sent him.* For reconciling of which place with those already mentioned, we are to *understand* that here was a *particular contest* between two *Prophets*, *Hananiah* and *Jeremiah*; *Jeremiah* he foretold *evil* to *come*, though unwillingly, *v.* 6. *Hananiah* he *propheſied peace.* Now *Jeremiah*, according to *God's* peculiar *directions* and *inspiration*, appeals to the *event* to *determine* whose *Prophecy* was the *truest*: Now, saith *Jeremiah*, if the *Prophecy* of *Hananiah* concerning *peace* be *fulfilled*, then he is the *true Prophet*, and I the *false*. And in this *case* when *two Prophets propheſie* contrary *things*, it stands to *reason* that *God* will not *reveal* any *thing* by the *mouth* of his own *Prophet* which shall not infallibly come to pass, that thereby the *truth* of his own *Prophet* may be fully *manifested*. Besides, *Jeremiah* refers not *merely* to the *event* foretold, but gives a sudden *specimen* of his own *truth* in another *Prophecy* concerning the *death* of *Hananiah*, which was punctually accomplished the same year, *ver.* 17. And which is most considerable to our *purpose*, both these *Prophets* considered the same *people* under the same

circumſtances, and with the ſame *conditions*; and ſo *Jeremiah*, becauſe of their *incorrigibleneſs*, *foretels deſolation* certainly to come; notwithſtanding this, *Hananiah* foretels *peace* and *ſafety*, which was contrary directly to *God's method* of *proceeding*, and ſo the *falſity* of his *Prophecy* would *infallibly* be diſcovered by the *event*. So that notwithſtanding this *inſtance* it appears *evident*, that *predictions* of *temporal bleſſings* do ſuppoſe *conditions*, and ſo have not always the *event* fulfilled, when the *people* do not *perform* their *condition* of *obedience*. And thus we have now laid down the *rules* whereby the *truth* of *Prophecies* was to be *judged*; by which it appears what little *need* the conſtant *Prophets* had to *appeal* to *miracles* to *manifeſt* the *certainty* of *Divine revelation* in them. So we have finiſhed our firſt *propoſition* concerning the *manner* of *trying Divine revelation* in the *Prophets God* ſent among his *people*.

Sect. 15. 2. *Prop.* We now come to the ſecond general propoſition concerning the Prophets. *Thoſe Prophets whom God did imploy upon ſome extraordinary meſſage for confirming the truth of the religion eſtabliſhed by him, had a power of miracles conferr'd upon them in order to that end.* So that we muſt diſtinguiſh the *ordinary imployment* of *Prophets* which was either *inſtruction* or *prediction* of *future events* among *God's* own *people*, from their *peculiar meſſages* when they were *ſent* to give *evidence* to the *truth* of that *way* of *religion* which was then ſetled by *God's* own *appointment*. Now the *Prophets generally* did *ſuppoſe* the *truth* of their *religion* as *owned* by thoſe they were *ſent* to, and therefore it had been very *needleſs*, *imploying* a *power* of *miracles* among *them* to *convince* them of *that* which they believed *already*. For we never *read* among all the *revolts* of the people of the *Jews* that they were lapſed ſo *far* as *totally* to *reject* the *Law* of *Moſes*, (which had been, to alter the *conſtitution* of their *Commonwealth*) although they did enormouſly *offend* againſt the *Precepts* of it, and that in thoſe *things* wherein the *honour* of *God* was mainly *concerned*, as is moſt plain in their *frequent* and *groſs Idolatry*: Which we are not ſo to *underſtand* as though they wholly *caſt* off the *worſhip* of the *true God*, but they *ſuperinduced* (as the *Samaritans* did) the *worſhip* of *Heathen Idols* with that of the *God* of *Iſrael*. But when the *revolt grew* ſo *great* and *dangerous* that it was ready to *ſwallow* up the true *worſhip* of *God*, unleſs ſome apparent *evidence* were

were given of the *falsity* of those *Heathen mixtures*, and further *confirmation* of the *truth* of the *established religion*, it pleased *God* sometimes to send his *Prophets* on this peculiar *message* to the main *instruments* of this *revolt*: as is most conspicuous in that dangerous *design* of *Jeroboam*, when he out of a Politick *end* set up his *two calves* in *opposition* to the *Temple* at *Jerusalem*; and therein it was the more dangerous in that in all *probability* he designed not the *alteration* of the *worship* it self, but the *establishment* of it in *Dan* and *Bethel*. For his *interest* lay not in *drawing* of the *people* from the *worship* of *God*, but from his *worship* at *Jerusalem*, which was contrary to his *design* of *Cantonizing* the *Kingdom*, and taking the greatest *share* to himself. Now that *God* might confirm his *peoples* faith in this dangerous *juncture* of *time*, he sends a *Prophet* to *Bethel*, who by the *working* of *present miracles* there, *viz. the renting the Altar and withering of* Jeroboam's *hand*, did manifest to them that these *Altars* were *displeasing* to *God*, and that the true *place* of *worship* was at *Jerusalem*. So in that famous *fire-Ordeal* for *trying* the *truth* of *religion* between *God* and *Baal* upon mount *Carmel* by *Elijah*, *God* was pleased in a *miraculous way* to give the most *pregnant* testimony to the *truth* of his own *worship*, by causing a *fire* to come down from *heaven* and *consume* the *sacrifice*, by which the *Priests* of *Baal* were confounded and the *people* confirmed in the *belief* of the *only true God*: for presently upon the *sight* of this *miracle* the people fall on their *faces* and say, *the Lord he is God, the Lord he is God*. Whereby we plainly see what clear *evidence* is given to the *truth* of that *religion* which is *attested* with a *power* of *miracles*. Thus the *widow* of *Sarepta* which was in the *Countrey* of *Zidon*, was brought to *believe Elijah* to be a *true Prophet* by his raising up her *son* to *life*. And the *woman* said to *Elijah*, *Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord by thy mouth is truth*. So we see how *Naaman* was convinced of the *true God* by his *miraculous cure* in *Jordan* by the *appointment* of *Elisha*, *Behold now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in* Israel; by which *instances* it is *demonstrable* that either the *faith* of all these *persons* was *built* upon *weak* and *insufficient grounds*, or that a *power* of *miracles* is an *evident confirmation* of the *truth* of that *religion* which is *established* by them. For this we see was the great

1 King. 12. 27.

1 King. 13. 2.

1 King. 18. 38.

1 King. 18. 39.

1 King. 17. 24.

2 King. 5. 15.

end for which God did imploy any of his *Prophets* to work *miracles*, viz. to be as an *evident demonstration* of the *truth* of what was revealed by him. So that this *power* of *miracles* is not merely a *motive* of *credibility*, or a *probable inducement* to *remove prejudice* from the *person*, as many of our *Divines* speak, but it doth *contain* an *evident demonstration* to *common sense* of the *truth* of that *religion* which is confirmed by them.

Sect. 16. And thus we assert it to have been in the case of *Moses*, the *truth* of whose *message* was attested both among the *Ægyptians* and the *Israelites* by that power of *miracles* which he had. But herein we have the great *Patrons* of *Moses* our greatest enemies, viz. the *present Jews*; who by reason of their *enmity* to the *doctrine* of *Christ* which was attested by *unparallel'd miracles*, are grown very shy of the argument drawn from thence: Insomuch that their great Dr. *Maimonides* lays down this for a *confident maxime* משרה רבנו לא האמינו בו ישראל מפני האותות: *The Israelites did not believe in* Moses *our Master for the sake of the Miracles which he wrought.* Did they not? the more *shame* for *them*: and if they *did*, the more *shame* for this *great Rabbi* thus to belye them. But the *reason* he gives for it is, *because there may remain some suspicion in ones mind, that all miracles may be wrought by a power of Magick* or *Incantation*: Say ye so? what, when *Moses* confounded all the *Magicians* in *Ægypt*, and made themselves who were the most *cunning* in these *things* confess it was the *finger* of *God*, and at last give out as not able to *stand* before *Moses*? might one still *suspect* all this to be done by a *Magical power*? *Credat Judæus Apella, non ego.* This is much like what *another* of their *Doctors* says, whom they call the *Divine Philosopher*, that *Elisha* his *raising* the *child* to *life*, and *curing Naaman's leprosie*; and *Daniel's escaping the Lions*, and *Jonas out of the whale's belly*, might all come to pass by the *influence* of the *stars*, or by *Pythonism*. Very probable! but it is most *true* which *G. Vortius* there observes of the *Jews*, *nihil non nugacissimi mortalium fingunt ne cogantur agnoscere virtute ac digito quasi ipsius Dei Jesum nostrum effecisse miracula sua.* All their design in this is, only to *elevate* the *miracles* of *our blessed Saviour*, and to *derogate* all they can from the *belief* of them. Hence they tell us that, *nothing* is so *easie* to be *done* as *miracles*; the mere *recital* of the *Tetragrammaton* will

De fund. legis, c. 8. s. 1.

Albo. l. 1. c. 18.

work

work wonders, and that by this *Jeremiah* and *our Saviour* did all their *miracles*: It is well yet that he did no more than *one* of their own *Prophets* had done before him; but where I wonder do we read that ever the *pronouncing* of *four letters* raised *one* from the *dead* who had lain *four days* in the *grave*? or by what *power* did *Christ* raise *himself* from the *dead*; (which was the greatest *miracle* of all) could his dead body *pronounce* the *Tetragrammaton* to awaken its self with? But *Maimonides* further tells us, that the *miracles* which *Moses* wrought among the *Israelites* were merely for *necessity*, and not to *prove* the *truth* of his *Divine commission*, for which he *instanceth* in *dividing the red sea*, *the raining of Manna*, and *the destruction of* Corah *and his complices*. But setting aside that these two latter were the *immediate hand of God*, and not *miracles* done by *Moses*, yet it is *evident* that the *intent* of them was to *manifest* a *Divine presence* among them: and in the *tryal* of *Corah* *Moses* appeals to *God's immediate Providence* to manifest whether *God* had immediately imployed him or no. For it is evident by the *text* that the main *charge* they laid against *Moses* was *ambition* and *usurpation*; Numb. 16. 13. *Is it a small thing, say they, that thou hast brought us up out of a Land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thy self altogether a Prince over us*? Whereby it is evident they thought that *Moses* acted out of a *private design*, and aimed at his own *honour* and *authority*; which was an *imputation* of the *highest nature* that could be alledged *against* him. Now see how *Moses proceeds* to clear *himself*, (which is sufficient to stop the *mouths* of these *incredulous Jews*) for he lays the greatest *evidence* of his *Divine commission* upon a present *miracle*. And *Moses* said, *Hereby shall* V. 28, 29. *ye know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind; If these men die the common death of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me*, &c. Can any thing be more plain than that the only *intent* of this *miracle* was to make it *appear* that *Moses* took not his *office* upon *him*, but was *immediately* sent and imployed by *God* in what he did. But that which will put an end to this *controversie* is *God's* giving *Moses* a *power* to *work miracles* for that very *end* that the *Israelites* should *believe* him, *Exodus*, 8. 8, 9. And can we think they would have ever left *Ægypt*

as

as they did and followed *Moſes* into the *wilderneſs*, unleſs they had been fully *convinced* he was a *deliverer* ſent from *God*? It is *true* (that which the *Jews* ſpeak ſo much of) the *ſtatio in monte Sina* was a great *confirmation* both to their own *faith* and to *Moſes* his, according to what *God* had told him, *Exod.* 3. 12. but yet it follows not hence they had no firm *bottom* for their *faith* to ſtand on before (for then they might have been drowned in the red ſea as well as the *Ægyptians*) but *God* knowing their *incredulity* and *readineſs* to *diſobey* his *Law*, did at the *promulgation* of it *teſtifie* to their *eyes* and *ears* his own *preſence* in the *midſt* of them. And this certainly was *one* of the greateſt *miracles* of all: and therefore to oppoſe *this* to the *evidence* that is produced by *miracles* is only to *oppoſe* a *power of working miracles* to a *power* of *doing them*. So *vain* and *empty* then, ſo *falſe* and *fallacious*, yea ſo *directly contrary* to *holy Scripture* is that *Axiome* of the *Jews*, *Prophetiæ veritas non confirmatur miraculis*: for *miracles* are ſufficient *evidences* of *Divine revelation* in any whom *God* imploys, to *all* but *ſuch* as are *reſolved* not to *believe* them; and as one well ſaith, *Pertinaciæ nullum remedium poſuit Deus*; *God never works miracles to convince obſtinate Atheiſts and wilful Infidels*. This now is the firſt *caſe* wherein *miracles* are to be *expected*, which is, *when God imploys any upon an extraordinary meſſage, to be as Credentials to confirm their Divine commiſſion*.

Exod. 19. 9.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The eternity of the Law of *Moses* discussed.

The second case wherein miracles may be expected, when a Divine positive Law is to be repealed, and another way of worship established instead of it. The possibility in general of a repeal of a Divine Law asserted; the particular case of the Law of Moses *disputed against the Jews: the matter of that Law proved not to be immutably obligatory; because the ceremonial precepts were required not for themselves, but for some further end; that proved from* Maimonides *his confession: the precepts of the Ceremonial Law frequently dispensed with while the Law was in force. Of the passover of* Hezekiah, *and several other instances. It is not inconsistent with the wisdom of God to repeal such an established Law.* Abravanel's *arguments answered. Of the perfection of the Law of* Moses, *compared with the Gospel. Whether God hath ever declared he would never repeal the Law of* Moses. *Of adding to the precepts. Of the expressions seeming to imply the perpetuity of the Law of* Moses. *Reasons assigned why those expressions are used, though perpetuity be not implyed. The Law of* Moses *not built upon immutable reason, because many particular precepts were founded upon particular occasions, as the customs of the* Zabil; *many ceremonial precepts thence deduced out of* Maimonides; *and because such a state of things was foretold, with which the observation of the Ceremonial Law would be inconsistent. That largely discovered from the Prophecies of the old Testament.*

I Now come to the *second case* wherein *miracles* may be justly *expected*, which is, *when something which hath been before established by Divine Law, is to be repealed, and some other way of worship to be set up instead of it.* Two things are very necessary to be *spoken* to for the clearing of this *proposition*; first, *whether a Law once established by God himself be capable of a repeal*; Secondly, *What necessity there is of miracles to manifest God's intention of repealing a former Law.* These *two* contain the main *foundation* of the *dispute between* the *Sect.* 1.

the *Jews* and us, *viz. whether the Law of* Moſes *was ever to be laid aſide, and whether the miracles of our bleſſed Saviour were ſufficient evidences of God's intention by him to repeal the former Law eſtabliſhed by* Moſes? I begin with the *firſt*, whether a *Divine Law* in general or the *Law* of *Moſes* in *particular* may be *abrogated* or *repealed*, after *God* himſelf hath made it *evident* that the *promulgation* of it was from *himſelf*. This muſt be confeſſed the *ſtrongeſt* and moſt *plauſible plea* the *preſent Jews* have for their *Infidelity*, and therefore the *eternity* of the *Law* of *Moſes* is made by them one of the *fundamental articles* of their *preſent Creed*, and is pleaded for with the greateſt *ſubtilty* by their great *R. Abravanel*, who ſpends his whole 13 *Chapter de capite fidei* upon it, but with what ſucceſs, will be ſeen in our clearing of it. There are but *three things* can be *ſuppoſed* as the *grounds* why a *Law* once *promulged* by *God* himſelf, ſhould not be *capable* of *repeal*; and thoſe are either firſt, *becauſe the things themſelves commanded in that Law are of ſuch a nature, that they are not capable of being diſpenſed with:* Or ſecondly, *that it is not conſiſtent with the wiſdom of God to repeal a Law once eſtabliſhed:* Or thirdly, *that the reaſon of the Law continuing always the ſame, it would argue mutability in God to revoke that Law, and eſtabliſh another inſtead of it:* If we can therefore demonſtrate, *that the matter of the Law of Moſes is of a poſitive and mutable nature, that it is ſuitable to the wiſdom of God to alter it*, and *that ſufficient account in reaſon may be given for the alteration of it*, Then there can be no imaginable *neceſſity* that a *Law* once having *God* for its *Author*, muſt therefore *derive* from him an *eternal* and *immutable obligation.*

Sect. 2. Firſt then *as to the matter of the Law*; and here it muſt be *ſuppoſed*, that in the *matter* of *controverſie* between us and the *Jews*, the queſtion is not of any of thoſe *things* which are therefore *commanded*, becauſe they are *intrinſecally good*, as the *precepts* of the *natural or moral Law*; but of thoſe *things* which are therefore only *good*, becauſe *God commands them*, i. e. *things merely poſitive*, whoſe *worth* and *value* ariſeth not from the *intrinſick weight* of the *things*, but from the *external impreſs* of *divine authority* upon them. Now it is no *queſtion* on either hand whether *God* may require *theſe things* or no; nor whether theſe *things* will be *acceptable* unto *God*, ſo long

long as he *requires* them; but whether, when once *required*, the *obligation* to them can never cease. Such kind of *things* among the *Jews* we suppose all the *rites* and *ceremonies* of the *Law* to be; viz. *circumcision*, *distinction* of *meats* and *days*, *customs* of *sacrificing*, and such like, and whatever other *Laws* respected them as a *distinct* and *peculiar Common-wealth*. All these we say are such as do not carry an *immutable obligation* along with them; and that on these accounts.

1. First, *Because these things are not primarily required for themselves, but in order to some further end.* Things that are required upon their *own account*, carry an *indispensable obligation* in them to their *performance*; but where *things* are *commanded* not for *themselves*, but the *Legislator* doth *express* some *particular grounds* of *requiring* them, there the *end* and *intention* of the Legislator is the *measure* of their *obligation*. To which purpose *Maimonides* excellently speaks, when he saith, *That the particular manner of worship among the* Jews, *as sacrifices and oblations, were secundum intentionem secundam Dei, God's secundary intention and design; but prayer, invocation, and the like, were nearer God's primary intention: Now*, saith he, *for the first, they are no further acceptable to God, than as all the circumstances of time, place, and persons are observed, which are prescribed by God himself; but the latter are acceptable in any person, time, or place. And for this cause*, saith he, *it is that we find the Prophets often reproving men for their too great sedulity in bringing oblations, and inculcating this to them, that God did not intend these as the principal instances of his worship, and that God did not need any of these things.* So 1 *Sam.* 15. 22. *Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of rams*: Isa. 1. 11. *To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord.* And especially *Jerem.* 7. 22, 23. *For I spake not to your Fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Ægypt, concerning burnt-offerings; but this thing I commanded them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.* Of which words *Maimonides* saith, *Scrupulum moverunt omnibus, quos mihi videre aut audire contigit*; For say they, How can it be that God did not command them *concerning sacrifices*, when a great *part* of the *Law* is about them: But *Maimonides* well resolves the *doubt* thus, *That God's primary intention, and that which* *More Nevoch. p. 3. c. 32.*

be chiefly looked at, was obedience; but God's intention in ſacrifices and oblations, was only to teach them the chief thing, which was obedience. This then is of the number of thoſe things which are ſpoken *abſolutely*, but to be underſtood *comparatively*, as, *I will have mercy and not ſacrifice. My doctrine is not mine, but his that ſent me. It is not you that ſpeak, but the Holy Ghoſt*, &c. So that we ſee all the *goodneſs* which is in theſe *things*, is *conveyed* into them by that which is *morally good*, which is *obedience*; and *God* did never *regard* the *performance* of thoſe *Laws* any *further* than as it was an *expreſſion of obedience*, and it was *conjoyned* with thoſe other *moral duties* which were moſt *agreeable* to the *Divine nature*. And in this ſence many underſtood that *difficult place*, Ezek. 20. 25. *And I gave them* חקים לא טובים *ſtatutes that were not good*, i. e. ſay they, *comparatively with theſe things which were ſimply and in themſelves good*; to which purpoſe they give this rule. *Aliquid negatur ineſſe alicui, quod alterius comparatione exiſtimatur exiguum.* But I rather think that which the *Chaldee Paraphraſt* ſuggeſts, and others *explain* further, to be the *meaning* of that *place*, viz. that by the *precepts that were not good*, is meant the *cruel* and *tyrannical impoſitions* of thoſe *enemies God* for their ſins did deliver *them* over to, which were far from being *acceptable* to them, which is frequently the *ſence* of *good* in *Scripture*. Thus we ſee one *reaſon* why the *ceremonial precepts* do not in *themſelves* imply an *immutable obligation*, becauſe they are not *commanded* for themſelves, but in order to a *further end*.

Sect. 3. 2. *Becauſe God hath frequently diſpenſed with the ceremonial precepts when they were in greateſt force, if the end of them could be attained without them.* Thus the *precept* of *circumciſion ſlept* during the *Iſraelites travels* in the *wilderneſs*. Thus Exod. 29. 33. *David* ate of the *ſhew-bread*, which is expreſly forbidden in the *Law*; the *Jews* think to evade this by diſtinguiſhing between the *bread* of *confeſſion* in the *Euchariſtical offering* mentioned *Leviticus* 7. 13. and the proper *ſhew-bread*: Now they ſay *David* eat only of the *firſt*, and not of the *ſecond*; but this is *gloſſa Aurelianenſis*, which overthrows the *Text*; for it is expreſly ſaid, that the *ground* why the *Prieſt* gave him *holy bread*, was becauſe there was *none* there but לחם הפנים, *the ſhew-bread*, 1 Sam. 21. 6. A like *violation* of the *Law* without reproof, is commonly ſuppoſed by the *Jews* to have

have been in the siege of *Jericho*, viz. in the *case* of the *Sabbath*. But it is more plain in that *Anamalous Passover* observed by *Hezekiah*, which many of the *Jews* themselves acknowledge was not observed as the *second Passover* provided by the *Law* to be *celebrated* on the 14 *day* of the *second month by those who were debarred of the first for their legal uncleanness*; but they suppose it to have been intended for the *legal Passover*; only because the *fourteenth* of *Nisan* was *passed* before the *sanctification* of the *Temple was finished*, lest they should celebrate none at all that *year*, they tell us that *Hezekiah* with the consent of the *Rulers*, did make an *Intercalation* that *year* of a whole *month*, and so *Nisan* was reckoned for the *second Adar*, and *Jiar* for *Nisan*, from whence they say that *Hezekiah* did *intercalate Nisan* in *Nisan*, that is, added another *Nisan* to the *first*. But where do we read any such thing *permitted* in the *Law* as the *celebrating* the *first Passover* the 14th of the *second month*? But granting that it was observed as a *second Passover*, because of the *want* of *legal sanctification* both in *Priests* and *People*; yet we find great *irregularities* in the *observation* of it; for it is expressly said, *That a multitude of the people had not cleansed themselves, yet they did eat the Passover otherwise than it was written.* And yet it is *said* upon *Hezekiah*'s *prayer, that the Lord hearkened to* Hezekiah, *and healed every one.* So that we see *God* himself did *dispense* with the strict *ceremonial precepts* of the *Law*, where men did look after the *main* and *substantial parts* of the *worship God* required from them. Nay *God* himself hath expressly *declared* his own *will* to *dispense* with the *ritual* and *ceremonial Law*, where it comes to stand in *competition* with such *things* as have an *internal goodness* in them, when he saith, *he desired mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings.* Thus we plainly see that the *ceremonial Law*, however *positive* it was, did yield as to its *obligation*, when any *thing* that was *moral*, stood in *competition* with it. And so the *Jews* themselves suppose an open *violation* of the *judicial Law* to have been in the *hanging* up of *Saul*'s *sons*, a long time together, directly contrary to *Deut.* 21. 23. which they conceive to have been from the 16 of *Nisan* to the 17 of *Marcheshvan*, which is as much as from our *March* to *September*, whereas the *Law* saith expressly that the *body of one*

Numb. 9. 11.

2 Chron. 29. 17.

V. Selden. de Anno civili Jud. cap. 9.

2 Chron. 30. 18.

V. 20.

Hos. 6. 6.

2 Sam. 21. 9. 10.

that is hanged ſhall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou ſhalt in any wiſe bury him that day. One of the *Jewiſh Rabbies*, as G. *Voſſius* tells us, is ſo troubled at this, *that he wiſheth that place in* Samuel *expunged out of Scripture, that the name of God might be ſanctified.* But whether this were done עַל פִּי הַדִּיבּוּר, *by the command of the Oracle or no*, or whether only by a *general permiſſion*, we ſee it was *acceptable unto God*; for upon that the *Gibeonites famine* was *removed, and God was intreated for the Land.* Thus we have now proved that there is no *immutable* and *indiſpenſable obligation* which ariſeth from the *things themſelves.*

Nat. in Abrav. c. 13.

Sect. 4.

Secondly, It is no way inconſiſtent with the *wiſdom of God* to repeal ſuch a *Law* when once *eſtabliſhed.* The main argument of that learned *R. Abravanel*, whereby he would eſtabliſh the *eternity of the Law of Moſes*, is fetched from hence, *That this Law was the reſult of the wiſdom of God, who knows the ſuitableneſs of things he appoints to the ends he appoints them for; as God hath appointed bread to be the food of mans body: Now we are not to enquire why God hath appointed bread and no other thing to be the food of man; no more*, ſaith he, *are we to enquire why God hath appointed this Law rather than another for the food of our ſouls; but we are to reſt contented with the counſels of God, though we underſtand not the reaſons of them.* This is the ſubſtance of that argument, which he more largely deduceth. To which we anſwer, that his *argument* holds good for *obedience* to all *God's poſitive precepts* of what *kind* or *nature* ſoever they be, ſo long as we know their *obligation* to *continue*; but all the *queſtion* is, whether every *poſitive precept* muſt *always continue* to *oblige.* And thus far his *ſimilitude* will hold good, that whatever *God* doth *command*, we are to *look* upon it to be as *neceſſary* to *our ſouls*, as *bread* to our *bodies*; but hence it follows not that our *ſouls* muſt be always held to the *ſame poſitive precepts*, any more than our *bodies* to the *ſame kind* of *food.* Nay, as in our *bodies* we find ſome *kind* of *food* always *neceſſary*, but the *kind* of it to *alter* according to *age*, *health*, and *conſtitutions*; ſo we ſay ſome *kind* of *Divine revelation* is always *neceſſary*; but *God* is graciouſly pleaſed to *temper* it according to the *age* and *growth* of his *people*; ſo he fed them as with *milk* in their *nonage*, with a *ritual* and *ceremonial Law*, and *trained* them up by

Roſh. Amanana. c. 13.

by degrees under the *Nursery* of the *Prophets* till the *Church* was grown to *age*, and then *God* fed it with the *strong meat* which is *contained* in *God's revelation* of his *will* by the *Gospel* of his *Son*: And therein was abundantly seen *God's* πολυποίκιλος σοφία, his *variegated wisdom*, that he made choice of such *excellent* and *proportionable ways* to his peoples *capacity* to *prepare* them *gradually* for that *full* and *compleat revelation* which was reserved for the *time* of the *appearance* of the *true Messias* in the world. For can any thing be more plain than the *gradual progress* of *Divine revelation* from the *beginning* of the *world*? That fair *resemblance* and *portraicture* of *God himself*, and *his will* upon *his word* (if I may so express it) had its *ground-work* laid upon man's *first Apostasie*, in the *promise* made *Gen.* 3. 15. whereon some *further lines* were *drawn* in the times of the *Patriarchs*, but it had its σκιαγραφία, it was *shadowed* out the *most* in the *typical* and *ceremonial Law*, but was never *filled* up to the *life*, nor had its *perfect* ζωγραφία, 'till the *Son* of *God* himself *appeared* unto the *world*. If then it be *inconsistent* with the *wisdom* of *God* to *add* any thing to the *Law* of *Moses*, why not to the *revelation* made to *Adam* or the *Patriarchs*? or especially to the *seven precepts* of *Noah*, which they suppose to have *been given* to all *mankind* after the *flood*? If it were not *repugnant* to the *wisdom* of *God* to superadd *rituals* and *ceremonials* to *morals* and *naturals*, why shall it be to take down the *Scaffolds* of *Ceremonies*, when *God's* spiritual *Temple* the *Church* of *God* is come to its full *height*? Is there not more *reason* that *rituals* should give *place* to *substantials*, than that such should be *super-induced* to *morals*?

Sect. 5. There are only two things can be pleaded by the *Jews* why it should be more *repugnant* to the *wisdom* of *God* to add to the *Law* of *Moses*, than to any former *revelation*, which are the greater *perfection* they suppose to be in this *revelation* above *others*, and that *God* in the *promulgation* of it did *express* that he would *never* alter it. But both these are manifestly *defective* and *insufficient* in order to the *end* for which they are *produced*. For *first*, what evidence is there that the *Law* of *Moses* contained so great *perfection* in it, as that it was not *capable* of having any *additions* made to it by *God* himself? We speak not now of the *perfection* of the *Moral Law*, which it is granted contained in it the *foundation* of all *positive precepts*, Psal. 19. 10.

for

for this we never contend for the *abrogation* of, but the *ritual Law* is that we meddle with; and is it *poſſible* any men ſhould be ſo *little befriended* by *reaſon* as to think this to be the *utmoſt pitch* of what *God* could *reveal* to the *world* as to the *way* of his own *worſhip?* Let any indifferent *rational perſon* take the *precepts* of the *Goſpel*, and lay them in the *balance* with *thoſe* of the *Ceremonial Law*, and if he makes any *ſcruple* of *deciding* on which ſide the *over-weight* lies, we may have *cauſe* to *ſuſpect* him *forſaken* of that little *reaſon* which gave him the *name* of *man*. Let but the fifth of *Matthew* be laid againſt the whole *book* of *Leviticus*, and then ſee whether *contains* the more *excellent precepts*, and more *ſuitable* to the *Divine nature?* I ſpeak not this to *diſparage* any *thing* which had once *God* for the *Author* of it, but to let us *ſee* how far *God* was from the *neceſſity* of *natural agents* to act to the *height* of his *ſtrength* in that *diſcovery* of his *Will*. *God* is *wiſe* as well as *righteous* in all his *ways*; as he can command *nothing* but what was *juſt*; ſo he *will* command *nothing* but what is *good*, nay *excellent* in its *kind*. But though all the *Stars* be in the ſame *firmament*, *yet one ſtar differs from another in glory*; though they may be all *pearls*, yet ſome may be more *orient* than others are; every *place* of *holy Scripture* may have its *crown*, but ſome may have their *aureolæ*, a greater *excellency*, a *fuller* and *larger capacity* than the *other* hath; every *parcel* of *Divine revelation* may have ſome *perfection* in its *kind*, yet there may be ſome *monſtra perfectionis* in *Scaliger*'s expreſſion, that may far *out-vye* the *glory* and *excellency* of the reſt. Can we think the *miſts* and *umbrages* of the *Law* could ever *caſt* ſo *glorious* a *light* as the *Sun* of *righteouſneſs* himſelf in his *Meridian elevation?* As well may we think a *dark ſhady paſſage* more *magnificent* and *glorious* than the moſt *Princely Palace*, a *picture* drawn in *Charcoal* more *exquiſite* and *curious* than the *lines of Apelles*, ſome *imperfect rudiments* more *exact* and *accurate* than the moſt *elaborate work*, as go *about* to *compare* the *Law* of *Moſes* with the *Goſpel* of *Jeſus Chriſt* in point of *excellency* and *perfection*. Let the *Jews* then boaſt never ſo *much* of their *gradus Moſaicus*, and how much it *exceeds* the *degree* of *revelation* in other *Prophets*, we *know* if his *light* be *compared* with what the *Goſpel* communicates, *Moſes* himſelf ſaw but as in a *glaſs darkly*, and not *in ſpeculo lucido*,

lucido, as the *Jews* are wont to speak. We honour *Moses much*, but we have *learnt* to honour him at whose *transfiguration* he was *present* more; neither can that be *thought* any *disparagement* to him who accounted *the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Ægypt.*

Sect. 6. *But it may be, though the Law in its self be not so absolutely perfect, yet God may have declared he will never alter it, and then it is not consistent with Divine wisdom to repeal it.* Very true: *God* will never *alter* what he hath said *he will not*; but where is it that he hath thus bound up himself? Is it in that noted place to this purpose, *Thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it?* So indeed *Maimonides* argues; but therein more like a *Jew* than himself; and yet one of his own *Nation* therein far more *ingenuous* than he, gives a most sufficient answer to it, which is *R. Jos. Albo*, whose words are thus produced by *Vorstius* and others; *the Scripture only admonisheth us, that we should not add to nor diminish from God's commands according to our own wills; but what hinders*, saith he *but God himself may according to his own wisdom add or diminish what he pleaseth?* But are they in good earnest when they say *God* bound up *himself* by this *speech?* whence came then all the *Prophetical revelations* among the *Jews?* did these add nothing to the *Law of Moses*, which was as much the *will* of *God* when *revealed* by them, as any thing was *revealed* by *Moses* himself? or will they say that all those *things* were *contained* for the *substance* in the *Law* of *Moses*, as to what concerned *Practice?* Very true; but not in the *Ceremonial*, but the *Moral Law*; and so we shall not stick to grant that the whole *duty* of *man* may be reduced to that. But if *adding to the precepts* be *the doing of God's commands in another way than he hath prescribed, and diminishing from them be merely not to do what God hath commanded*, as some conceive, then these *words* are still more *remote* from the *fence* affixed on them by the *incredulous Jews*. For why may not *God* himself *add* to his own *Laws* or alter the *form* of them, although we are *always bound* directly to *follow God's* declared *will?* May not *God* enlarge his own *will*, and *bring* his *Scholars* from the *rudiments* of their *nonage* to the higher *knowledge* of those who are *full-grown?* or must the *world* of *necessity* do that which the *old Roman* so much abhorred, *senescere in elementis*, wax gray.

Deut. 12. 32.

De fund leg. c. 9. l. 1. Ikkarim. l. 3. c. 14.

gray in learning this A, B, C? or was the *Ceremonial Law* like the *China Characters*, that the *world* might ſpend its *age* in *conning* of them? But it appears that there was no other meaning in that ſtrict *prohibition*, than that *men* ſhould not of their *own heads* offer to find out *new ways* of *worſhip* as *Jeroboam* did, but that *God's revelation* of his own *will* in all its *different degrees* was to be the *adequate rule* of the *way* and *parts* of his *own worſhip*. And I would fain know of the *Jews* whether their *own ſevere* and *ſtrict prohibitions* of *things* not at all forbidden in the *Law* of *God*, and that on *a religious account*, as סיג לתורה *a boundary to the Law*, come not *nearer* the *adding to God's Law*, than *God's* own further *declaration* of his *will* doth? All the *diſpute* then muſt be, not whether *God* may add to his own *Law*, but whether the *Goſpel* be a *prohibited addition* to the *Law* of *Moſes*, that is, whether it be only the *invention* of *men*, or it be the *expreſs declaration of the will of God?* As to which controverſie, he is no true *Chriſtian* who dare not *readily* joyn *iſſue* with them, and undertake to *prove* by all the *arguments* by which they *believe* the *Law* of *Moſes* to have been of *Divine revelation*, that the *Goſpel* of *Chriſt* is a clear *manifeſtation* of the *Will* of *God*. But of that afterwards.

Sect. 7. From hence it is evident that *God* hath not by this *place* tied up *himſelf* from any further *manifeſtation* of his *mind* beyond the *Law* of *Moſes*; but it may be they may put greater *confidence* in thoſe *expreſſions* which ſeem neceſſarily to imply a *perpetual* and *unalterable obligation* in the *Law* of *Moſes*; For, ſaith the late learned *Rabbi Manaſſe Ben Iſrael*, *If by ſuch expreſſions as thoſe are uſed in Scripture which ſeem to import the perpetuity of the Law of* Moſes, *ſomewhat elſe ſhould be meant than they ſeem to expreſs*; *what did* Moſes *and the Prophets in uſing them but lay a ſtumbling-block in the ways of men, whereas they might have ſpoken clearly and told us there ſhould a time come when the Ceremonial Law ſhould oblige no longer?* This being a *charge* of ſo high a *nature*, muſt not be *diſmiſſed* without a particular enquiry into the *expreſſions* which are the *ground* and *reaſon* of it. The places moſt inſiſted on by the *Jews*, are *Deut.* 29. 29. *Things which are revealed belong to us and to our children* עד עולם *for ever.* So *Levit.* 23. 14. *the precept of offering the firſt fruits is there called*

Concil. in Levit. 9. 7.

called חקת עולם *a ſtatute for ever*; and that of the *Paſſover*, *Exod.* 12. 17. where the ſame *expreſſion* is uſed. From hence they *inferr* that no *alteration* can *happen* as to the *Ceremonial Law*, ſince *God* himſelf hath *declared* that it ſhall *continue* for *ever*. To this common *argument* of the *Jews*, it is in general replied, That the *word* in which the main force of the *argument* lies, doth not *carry* with it an abſolute *perpetuity*, but it ſignifies according to the *ſubject* it is *joyned* with. So when it is applied to *God*, it ſignifies *Eternity*, not ſo much from the mere *importance* of the *word*, as from the *neceſſary exiſtence* of the *Divine nature*. Thence *Maimonides* himſelf can ſay, *Proinde ſciendum eſt quod Olam non neceſſario ſignificet aternitatem, niſi ei conjungatur Ed* (עד *vel* ער) *idque vel poſt illud ut Olam vaed, vel ante Ad Olam.* Although this *rule* of his hath no certainty at all in it, as appears *from* his *collection* of it, which is *becauſe* it is ſaid, *Pſal.* 10. 16. *The Lord he is King Olam vaed, for ever and ever:* but as I ſaid already, that is not from the *ſignification* of the word, but the *nature* of the *thing*. And it is moſt plain in Scripture that עולם is ſo far from implying a neceſſary *perpetuity*, that it is *applied* to ſuch things as can have no long *duration*, as *Exod.* 21. 6. *and he ſhall ſerve him* לעולם, that is, (as the *Jews* themſelves expound it) *to the next Jubilee, though it were near or far off.* So 1 *Sam.* 1. 22. where *Samuel* is ſaid *to abide before the Lord* עד עולם *for ever*, where we find *Maimonides* his *Ad Olam* in a ſence very far ſhort of *Eternity*; this is ſo plain that the formerly cited *R. Joſeph Albo* doth in *terms* confeſs it, and produceth a *multitude* of other places to the ſame *purpoſe*. For which though he be ſufficiently cenſured by his *Brethren*, yet we may ſee there may be ſome *ingenuity* left in a *Jewiſh Rabbi*, even in the *grand diſpute* concerning the *Eternity* of the Law of *Moſes*. *More Nevoch. p.* 2. *c.* 28.

All the difficulty now is to *aſſign* ſome *rational accounts* why ſuch *precepts* which *God* did not intend ſhould be *always obligatory*, yet ſhould be *enforced* upon *them* in ſuch *expreſſions* which may ſeem at leaſt to *imply* a *perpetuity*. Of which theſe may be given. Firſt, *That theſe precepts to which theſe expreſſions are annexed, ſhould not be looked on as mere ambulatory Laws that did only concern them in their travels through the wilderneſs, and not continue obligatory when they were ſetled in* *Sect.* 8.

Canaan. For which purpoſe we are to obſerve, That though all the *Laws* were given in one *body* in the *wilderneſs*, yet the *obligation* to *all* of *them* did not *commence* at the ſame *time*, neither were they to *continue* for the *ſame duration*; theſe three ſorts of *precepts* may be *obſerved* among them; firſt ſuch as *concerned* them *only* in their *preſent condition*, as that about the *Tabernacle*, which was then a *moveable Temple* among them, *ſuitable* to their *condition*; but when they were ſetled, *God* was to have a ſetled *houſe* too. So that *precept* of going without *the camp*, Deut. 23. 12. had an immediate *reſpect* to their *peregrination*. *Secondly*, Such *precepts* as were given them, but they were not *bound* to *perform* them 'till their *ſettlement* in *Canaan*, *as driving out the Canaanites*, Numb. 33. 52. *building the Temple in the place which God ſhould chooſe*, *erecting judicatories in their ſeveral Cities*, *chooſing a King*, &c. *Thirdly*, There were ſuch *precepts* as concern them where *ever* they were, whether in the *Wilderneſs* or in *Canaan*; now theſe are the *precepts* which are ſaid to be *perpetual*. This is the account given of it by *H. Grotius*; but becauſe this may be liable to ſome *exceptions*, I therefore add, *Secondly*, That the reaſon of thoſe expreſſions being annexed to the precepts of the Ceremonial Law, is, *becauſe they were to continue obligatory 'till ſuch a remarkable period of time came which ſhould alter the ſtate of things among them.* And ſuch a period of time the *coming* of the *Meſſias* is by themſelves *ſuppoſed* to be, when in their famous computation they make three *Epocha's*, *before the Law*, *under the Law*, *and the coming of the Meſſias.* And it is evident yet by them, that they do ſtill expect a *wonderfull alteration* of the *State of things* when the *Meſſias* comes; doth it not therefore ſtand to *reaſon* that לעולם ſhould be added to ſuch *things* which were to *continue* 'till ſo *great* an *alteration* as ſhould be on the *coming* of the *Meſſias*, eſpecially if the *coming* of the *Meſſias* had been *deferred* ſo long as they falſly ſuppoſe it to be? But however, granting that a new *ſeries* of *times* or αἰὼν is to *commence* from the *Meſſias*, there is very great *reaſon* why that *expreſſion* ſhould be *added* to thoſe *things* which were to *continue* as *long* as the αἰὼν did, *i. e.* *'till Meſſias came*, which we freely acknowledge. And in this ſence is עולם often taken for ſuch a *duration* of *things* which had ſome *remarkable period* to conclude it, as in the caſe

De Verit. Rel. Chriſt. l. 5. ſ. 7.

case of the *Jubilee*, in the *servant* mentioned, and the special *employment* which *God* called *Samuel* to, in this *case*, as to the *event*, or the *end* of his *life* in *Hannah's designation*, when she said he should attend upon the *Lord* for ever. *Thirdly*, These *precepts* are said to *endure for ever, which would still have continued obligatory, unless God himself had altered the obligation of them, by a new revelation of his will.* For in this *case* it is most *certain* that all *positive precepts* coming *immediately* from *God*, do carry with them an *unalterable obligation*, unless the *Legislator* himself do in as *evident* a *way repeal* them as he did once *establish* them; that is, in such *Laws* which depend merely upon *God's positive* and *arbitrary will.* For in this *case God* allows *none* to *alter* any thing concerning his *Law*; but *indispensable obedience* is our *duty* 'till *God* himself *repeal* his *former Laws.* And this we *assert* to be the *case* in the *Gospel.* So that it appears plainly that it implies nothing *inconsistent* with the *wisdom* of *God* to *repeal* an *established positive Law*, though some *expressions* to *prejudiced minds* seem to imply a *perpetuity* in it.

Sect. 9. We come therefore to the *third thing* which may make a *positive Law unalterable*, which is, *when the reason of it is immutable*; for then, say they, it would argue *mutability* in *God* to *repeal* it. If we can therefore make it evident that the *Ceremonial Law* was not established on an *immutable reason*, and that the *reason* on which it was established doth *suppose* a *state* of *things* to come, in which it should *expire*, then there cannot be the least *pretence* of *mutability* in *God* on the *repeal* of such a *Law*. First, *That it was not established upon an immutable reason:* The immutable reason of a *Law* must either be *fetched* from the *nature* of the *things* commanded, or the *grounds* of the *establishing* of it; we have already proved that the *nature* of the *positive precepts* of the *Ceremonial Law* do not carry in them an *intrinsecal goodness.* And here the *Sophistry* of the *Jews* is apparently *discovered*, that when they are *pressed* with this, they take *sanctuary* in the *Decalogue*, or some *spiritual precepts*, which comprehend in them the general *foundation* of the *Law*, as, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, &c. whereas these are very *remote* from the *matter* in *controversie*, which concerns not what *precepts* were *moral* in their *Law*, but what were purely *ceremonial*; which were

ſo far from being *founded* on an *immutable reaſon*, that the *particular occaſions* of the *giving* of many of them, is particularly aſſigned by their *own Writers*; eſpecially in the *main parts* of the *ceremonial worſhip* of *God* among them, the *reaſons* of which *Maimonides* ſaith may be deduced from the *cuſtoms* of the *Zabaiſts*, *the knowledge of whoſe opinions and cuſtoms*, he tells us, is *porta magna ad reddendas præceptorum cauſas, gives much light to the Law of Moſes*; and particularly of himſelf he ſaith, *Quòd multarum legum rationes & cauſæ mihi innotuerint ex cognitione fidei, rituum & cultus Zabiorum*; that he came to the right underſtanding of many of the *Laws* of *Moſes* by his knowledge in the *rites* and *cuſtoms* of theſe *Zabaiſts*. Granting therefore the *hypotheſis* of this *learned Rabbi*, that the *precepts* of the *Law* had moſt of them a *particular reſpect* to the *Idolatrous cuſtoms* of theſe people; what will hence follow but only this, That the *reaſon* of the *ceremonial precepts* did *reſpect* the *cuſtoms* in *uſe* when they were *given*, and ſo are not *founded* upon an *immutable reaſon?* And the more the *precepts* are whoſe reaſon is to be fetched from hence, the more *plain* and *evident* is the *thing* we *intended* by it, viz. *that the Ceremonial Law is not founded upon an unalterable reaſon.*

More Nevoch. l. 3. cap. 29.

Sect. 10. Now from this one *head* of the *Idolatrous cuſtoms* of thoſe *Nations* about them hath that *learned Authour* deduced the *reaſons* of very many of the moſt *obſcure commands* of the *Ceremonial Law:* As that concerning *rounding the corners of their heads*, which *Herodotus* tells us was the *cuſtom of the Arabians*, and others of the *Babylonian Prieſts*; by both which the *Zabii* may be meant, the *ſuperſtition* of the *Zabii* being *Chaldean*, as I have ſhewed already, and their *name*, as ſome conceive, from *Saba* the Son of *Chus*, whoſe poſterity were ſeated in *Arabia*, near to the *red Sea*; and that which confirms this opinion, is, that the *Sabeans* did, as *Philoſtorgius* ſaith, *worſhip the Sun and Moon*, as the *Zabaiſts* did in *Maimonides*; and withall *Bochartus* makes it evident from *Strabo*, that ſome of the *Babylonians* called *Gerrhæi*, poſſeſſed *themſelves* of the *Country* of the *Sabeans*, whereby this originally *Chaldaick ſuperſtition* might ſpread its ſelf in theſe *parts* near the *confines* of *Judæa*, which might be the cauſe why all thoſe *rites* which were uſed by theſe *Idolatrous people*, are ſo ſeverely forbidden to the *Jews: God* thereby ſetting up a *wall* of *ſeparation* between his

Levit. 19. 27. *V. Voſſ in Maim. de Idol. c.* 12.

Phaleg. l. 4. cap. 8.

his *people* and the *Nations* round about them, by making the *customs* of the *Jews* almost *Antipodes* to theirs; as those of *Japan* are to them of *China*. Upon the same ground it is supposed that other *precept* was made against *wearing a garment of linen and woollen*, because the *Idolatrous Priests used to go so cloathed*, as *Maimonides* tells us out of their *books*, and likewise that prohibition of a *woman's wearing the arms of a man, and a man's wearing the garments of a woman*, is very probably supposed to have had its *original* from that *Idolatrous custom* mentioned by the same *Authour*, *Ut vir gestet Vestimentum muliebre coloratum quando stat coram stella Veneris*; *similiter ut mulier induat loricam & arma bellica quando stat coram stella Martis*; but that *Authour* doth not deny a further *reason* to be couched in it for the *preservation* of *publick honesty*. Many other *precepts* are drawn from the same fountain by that same *Authour*, as *the sowing of divers seeds in the same ground*; *the forbidding the eating of the fruit of their trees for the first three years after they came to Canaan*; that being the furthest time wherein the *trees* of their own *plantation* would begin to bear in that Country. Now it was the *custom* of all those *Idolatrous people*, that the first *time* any *tree* did bear, *part* of the *fruit* was to be *burnt* up in an *offering* to the *Idol*, and the other *part* eaten in the *Idol-Temple*; or else they supposed their *trees* would never *prosper*: Now in opposition to this, *God* bids them bring the *fruit* of the *fourth year* to *him*, and eat of the *fifth themselves, that it may yield unto you the increase thereof*. So the *Idolaters* threatned all *parents* that their *children* would never *live*, unless they *caused them to pass through the fire*; from which custom *Maimonides* saith, *some even in his time would take the children that were new born, and move them up and down over a fire wherein odoriferous smells were cast*: Thence comes that strict prohibition of *giving the children to Moloch*, which was by that *custom* of *passing through the fire*. To this same *Head*, the same Authour refers that of *not eating the member of a living creature*, which we render *flesh with the life thereof*; which was forbidden, as he elsewhere tells us, not only for *avoiding cruelty*, but because the *Heathen Nations were wont in their Idolatrous Feasts to take a member off from a living creature, and eat it afterwards*; and in them likewise he supposeth they used the *boiling the flesh and the milk together*, *which*, saith he, *besides that it affords a most*

Lev. 19. 19.
More Nevoch. l. 3. *c.* 37.
Deut. 22. 5.
V. Selden de Diis Syris, Synt. 2. *cap.* 4.
Lev. 19. 19.
Lev. 19. 23.
Lev. 19. 24, 25.
Lev. 20. 2, 3.
Gen. 9. 4.
More Nevoch. p. 3. *c.* 48.

a most gross nourishment, savours of their Idolatrous practices too; and therefore, saith he, *it is observable that twice where this precept is mentioned, it follows that of the solemn appearance of the Males at* Jerusalem *thrice a year, whereby it seems to be implied that this action had relation to some great solemnity.* These and several other *precepts* of the *Law* of *Moses* are deduced by that very *learned Rabbi* from *Idolatrous customs*, as the *occasions* of *them*; which seem to have the more *reason* in them, because that *God* did in the general so strictly *forbid the Jews to walk after the custom of the Nations about them.* Thence *Origen* takes notice of the τὸ ξενίζον τῶν νόμων, καὶ τῷ ἰδιότροπον καθ' αὐτὸς πολίτειαν; for which he saith, they were διαβεβλημένοι, *reproached by the Heathens, because their Laws and Polity were so different from the custom of other Nations.* Thus we see then that many *precepts* of the *Ceremonial Law* were *founded*, neither on the *goodness* of the *things themselves*, nor on any *unalterable reason*, but were enforced on a peculiar *reason* on the *people* of the *Jews* at that time, as they were a *people separated* from the *rest* of the *world* for the *worship* of the *true God*. And for the other great *offices* wherein their *Religion* did so much *consist*, viz. *Sacrifices*, *distinction* of *meats*, *observation* of *Festivals*, *circumcision*, and such like; The particular *account* and *reason* of them is either *evident* in the *Law* its self, or fully *acknowledged* by their own Writers, that it is here *superfluous* to *insist* on them: Especially since so many have done that so largely already (particularly *Grotius*) whose *Labours* I intend not to transcribe.

Exod. 23. 17, 19. 34. 26.

Lev. 20. 23. *l. Celsum, l. 4.*

De verit. Rel. Christiana, l. 5.

Sect. 11. I come therefore to the second thing; which is, *That the Ceremonial Law was so far from being founded on an immutable reason, that while it was in its greatest force such a state of things was plainly foretold, with which the observation of that Law would be inconsistent.* For which we are to consider, that though the *Law* of *Moses* seemed outwardly to *respect* the *temporal advantages* of the *people* embracing it in the *Land* of *Canaan*; yet there was a *Spring* of *Spiritual Promises* whose *head* was higher than *Jordan* was, that *ran* down from the *Patriarchs*, and was more fully *opened* to *some* of them, which though it seemed to *run under ground* in the *midst* of the *Ceremonial observations* of the *Law*; yet it frequently *brake forth* and opened its *self* in the *midst* of them, and by *degrees* in

in the *Prophetical Age* did make its *self* a *larger channel*, 'till in the *time* of the *Messias* by its *force* and *violence* it *overthrew* those *banks* which *stood* in the *way* of it, and *overspread* the *face* of the *whole earth*. It is evident by the *whole series* of the *Scripture* of the *Old Testament*, that *God*'s ultimate *intention* was not to confine the saving *knowledge* of his *will* only to the *Jews*; for the great promise to *Abraham* was, *That in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed*; And as *Abraham rejoyced to see that day afar off*; so good *Jacob*, when he leaned on his *Jacob's staff*, took the *height* of that *day-star from on high*, which though like some of the fixed *stars*, might not for some time be *visible* to the inferior *world*; yet he foretold the *time* when he should *descend* into a *lower orb*, and become *conspicuous* in our *Horizon*. And consequently to his *appearance* in the *world*, would be the *drawing* not so much the *eyes* as the *hearts* of the *world* to him; for no sooner is it mentioned that *Shiloh comes when the Scepter departs from Judah*; but it immediately follows, *And to him shall the gathering of the people be*. Thus we see before ever the *Law* of *Moses* came to *include* the *people* of the *Jews* as *God's peculiar people*, there was a *design* on *foot*, for *inlarging* the *bounds* of *God's inheritance*, and *making the uttermost parts of the earth his Son's possession*. Can we then think *that the Law which came afterwards, could disannull the Covenant made* 430 *years before*, as the *Apostle* excellently reasons? Can we believe the *Mosaical dispensation* was the *utmost* of what *God* did *intend*, when *God* had before *promised* that the *blessing* of *Abraham should come upon us Gentiles also*? To which purpose it is very observable, that *Abraham was justified not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision*; *for he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith, being uncircumcised, that he might be the Father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised*; *that righteousness might be imputed unto them also*. Whereby it is evident that the great *blessings* promised to *Abraham*, did not respect him merely as *Progenitor* of the *Israelites*, but in a higher *capacity*, as *Father of the faithfull*; and that the *ground* of his *acceptance* with *God* did not *depend* on any *Ceremonial Rite*, such as *circumcision* was, *God imputing* his *faith* for *righteousness* before his being

Gen. 49. 10.

Gal. 4. 17.

Rom. 4. 10, 11.

ing *circumciſed*. But becauſe the *time* was not yet *come* wherein the grand *myſtery* of man's *ſalvation* by the *death* of the *Son* of *God* was to be *revealed*; therefore when *God* called the *Nation* of the *Jews* from their *bondage*, he made *choice* of a more *obſcure way* of *repreſenting* this *myſtery* to *them* through all the *umbrages* of the *Law*: And withall inforced his *precepts* with ſuch *terrible ſanctions* of *curſes* to *all that continued not in all that was written in that Law to do it*, to make them the more *apprehenſive* that the *ground* of their *acceptance* with *God*, could not be the *performance* of the *precepts* of that *Law*, but they ought to *breathe* after that *higher diſpenſation* wherein the *way* and *method* of *man's ſalvation* ſhould be fully *revealed when the fulneſs of time was come*. Now therefore *God* left them under the *Tutorage* and *Pædagogy* of the *Law*, which ſpake ſo *ſeverely* to them, that they might not think this was all *God* intended in *order* to the *happineſs* of *men*, but that he did *reſerve* ſome *greater thing* in *ſtore* to be enjoyed by his *people* when they were come to *age*.

Sect. 12. So that though the *Ceremonies* of the *Law* had not a *mouth* to *ſpeak* out *Chriſt*; yet they had a *hand* to *point* to *him*; for they were the *ſhadow* or dark *repreſentation* of *that* which was to be drawn afterwards to the greateſt *life*. And this was underſtood by all thoſe whoſe *hearts* were carried beyond the *outward*, *ſapleſs Letter* of the *Law*, to the more *inward* and *ſpiritual meaning* of it, (there being an εἰσωτερικὰ & ἐξωτερικα in the *Law* as well as *Philoſophy*,) and theſe *myſteries* were too not ſo *veiled* and *hidden*, but all that were ἐπόπται, *fully initiated*, might fully *underſtand* them; which made up that true *ſpiritual Cabala*, which was conſtantly *preſerved* among the true *Iſraelites*, which was more largely commented on by the *Prophets* of *ſucceeding Ages*; whoſe *care* it was to *unlock* this *Cabala*, and to *raiſe* up the *hearts* of the *people* in a higher *expectation* of the great *things* which were to come. Thence we not only read of the ſolemn *prayer* of the *Church* of the *Jews*, that the knowledge of *God* might be *diſperſed over all*
Pſal. 67. 2. *the Nations of the earth*, but we have many prophecies *that*
Iſaiah 2. 2. *when the mountain of the Lord's houſe ſhould be exalted, all nations ſhould flow unto it: that from the riſing of the Sun to the*
Mal. 1. 11. *going down thereof, God's name ſhall be great among the Gentiles, and*

and in every place incense should be offered to his name, and a pure offering; for his name shall be great among the Heathen. That the *Inscription* on the High-priest's forehead, *Holiness to the Lord*, should by reason of the large *diffusion* of a *Spirit* of *Holiness* in the *days* of the *Gospel*, *be set upon the bells of Horses, and that the pots in the Lord's house should be as bowls before the Altar*, i. e. that when the *Levitical service* should be laid aside, and that *Holiness* which was that *appropriated* to the *Priests* and *Instruments* of the *Temple*, should be discerned in those things which seemed most *remote* from it. That a *Priesthood after another order than that of* Aaron *should be established*, viz. *after the order of* Melchisedeck; and that he that was the *Priest after this order*, *should judge among the Heathen, and wound the heads over many Countries*; *that in the day of his power the people* should (not be frighted to obedience with *thunder-claps*, and *earth-quakes*, as at Mount *Sinai*) but should come and *yield themselves* as a *free-will offering* unto him, and yet their number be as *great* as the *drops of the dew which distill in the morning*. That *God out of other Nations would take unto himself for Priests and for Levites*; *that the desire of all Nations should speedily come*; *that the Messenger of the Covenant should come into his Temple*; nay, that *seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy City*; *that then the vision and prophecy should be sealed up*; *that the Sacrifice and Oblation should be caused to cease*; *that the City and the Sanctuary should be destroyed, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the War desolations are determined*; *that after threescore and two weeks* Messias *should be cut off, but not for himself*; *that by him transgression should be finished, and reconciliation for iniquity should be made, and everlasting righteousness should be brought in.* And lest all these *things* should be apprehended to be only a higher *advancing* of the *Levitical worship*, and the way of external *Ceremonies*, *God* expressly saith, *that he would make a new Covenant with the house of* Israel, *and with the house of* Judah; *not according to the Covenant that I made with their Fathers, in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the Land of Ægypt, which my Covenant they brake, although I was an husband to them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the house of* Israel *after those days, saith the*

Zach. 14. 20.

Psal. 110. 4, 5, 6.

Vers. 3.

Isa. 66. 21. Hag. 2. 7. Mal. 3. 1.

Dan. 9. 24, 26, 27.

Jer. 31. 31, 32.

Lord; I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. Can any one that now considers seriously the state of things thus described as it should come to pass, ever imagine that the *Levitical service* was ever calculated for this *State*? Was *God's Worship* to be confined to his *Temple* at *Jerusalem*, *when all the Nations of the earth should come to serve him*? Was the *High-priest* to make an *atonement* there, when an order of *Priest-hood* different from the *Aaronical* should be set up? Must the *Tribe* of *Levi* only attend at the *Temple*, when *God* should take *Priests* and *Levites out of all Nations that serve him*? What would become of the *Magnificence* and *Glory* of the *Temple*, when both *City* and *Sanctuary* shall be *destroyed*, and that must be within few *prophetical weeks* after the *Messias* is cut off? And must the *Covenant God* made with the *Israelites* continue for *ever*, when *God* expresly saith, he would make a *New One*, and that not *according* to the *Covenant* which he made with *them* then? It is so *evident* then, as nothing can well be *more*, that under the Old *Testament*, such a *state of Religion* was described and promised, with which the *Levitical worship* would be *inconsistent*; *and so that the Ceremonial Law was not at first established upon an immutable reason*, which was the thing to be proved.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

General Hypotheſes concerning the Truth of the Doctrine of Chriſt.

The great prejudice againſt our Saviour among Jews and Heathens, was the meanneſs of his appearance. The difference of the miracles at the delivery of the Law and Goſpel. Some general Hypotheſes to clear the ſubſerviency of miracles to the Doctrine of Chriſt. 1. *That where the truth of a doctrine depends not on evidence, but authority, the only way to prove the truth of the Doctrine, is to prove the Teſtimony of the Revealer to be infallible. Things may be true which depend not on evidence of the things. What that is, and on what it depends. The uncertainty of natural knowledge. The exiſtence of God, the foundation of all certainty. The certainty of matter of faith proved from the ſame principle. Our knowledge of any thing ſuppoſeth ſomething incomprehenſible. The certainty of faith as great as that of knowledge; the grounds of it ſtronger. The conſiſtency of rational evidence with faith. Yet objects of faith exceed reaſon; the abſurdities following the contrary opinion. The uncertainty of that which is called reaſon. Philoſophical dictates no ſtandard of reaſon. Of tranſubſtantiation and ubiquity, &c. why rejected as contrary to reaſon. The foundation of faith in matters above reaſon. Which is infallible Teſtimony; that there are ways to know which is infallible, proved.* 2. *Hypoth. A Divine Teſtimony the moſt infallible. The reſolution of faith into God's veracity as its formal object.* 3 *Hypoth. A Divine Teſtimony may be known, though God ſpeak not immediately. Of inſpiration among the Jews, and Divination among the Heathens.* 4. *Hypoth. The evidences of a Divine Teſtimony muſt be clear and certain. Of the common motives of faith, and the obligation to faith ariſing from them. The original of Infidelity.*

HAving now cleared that the *Law* of *Moſes* was capable of a *repeal*, I come to the *ſecond enquiry, Whether the miracles of our Saviour did give a ſufficient evidence of his power and* *Sect.* 1.

authority to repeal it. I ſhall not (to prevent too large an excurſion) inſiſt on any other *evidences* of our *Saviour*'s being the promiſed *Meſſias*, but keep *cloſe* to the *matter* of our preſent *debate* concerning the *evidence* which ariſeth from ſuch a *power* of *Miracles* as our *Saviour* had in order to his eſtabliſhing that *doctrine* which he came to publiſh to the world. The great ſtumbling-block in reference to our bleſſed *Saviour* among both the *Jews* and learned *Heathens*, was the *meanneſs* of his *appearance* in the world, not coming *attended* with that *ſtate* and *magnificence*, which they thought to be *inſeparable* from ſo great a *perſon*. The *Jews* had their *ſenſes* ſo *poſſeſſed* with the *thundrings* and *lightnings* on mount *Sinai*, that they could not imagine the *ſtructure* of their *Ceremonial worſhip* could be *taken down* with leſs *noiſe* and *terrour* than it was *erected* with. And withall *collecting* all thoſe *paſſages* of the *Old Teſtament* which ſeemed to foretel ſuch glorious *things* of the *days* of the *Meſſias*, (which either referr to his *ſecond coming*, or muſt be *underſtood* in a *ſpiritual ſence*) they having their *minds oppreſſed* with the *ſenſe* of their preſent *calamities*, applied them *wholly* to an *external greatneſs*, whereby they might be *delivered* from the *Tyranny* of the *Roman power*. The *Heathens*, as appears by *Celſus* and others, thought it very *ſtrange* that the *Son* of *God* ſhould *appear* in the *world* with ſo little *grandeur*, and have no greater *Train* than twelve ſuch obſcure *perſons* as the *Apoſtles* were. For, ſaith *Celſus*, ὅσπερ ὁ ἥλιος πάντα τὰ ἄλλα φαίνων πρῶτον αὐτὸν δείκνυσι, οὕτως ἐχρῆν πεποιηκέναι καὶ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ· *As the Sun, which enlightens all other things, doth firſt diſcover himſelf, ſo it was fitting the Son of God ſhould doe when he appeared to the world.* And ſo we ſay *he* did to all ſuch whoſe *minds* were not *blinded* through *obſtinacy* and *wilfull ignorance*. For although this *Son* of *righteouſneſs* was pleaſed for the better carrying on his *deſign* in the world to *wrap* up himſelf in a *cloud*, yet his *glory* could not be *confined* within it, but did *break through* that dark *veil* of his *humane nature*, and did diſcover it *ſelf* in a moſt *clear* and *convincing manner*. His *appearances* indeed were not *like* thoſe upon *Mount Sinai*, becauſe his *deſign* was not to *amuſe* men with the *glory* of his *Majeſty*, and to *terrifie* them from *Idolatry*, (which was a great reaſon of thoſe *dreadfull phænomena* at the *delivery* of the *Law*) but he came to draw all men to him by the *power* and *energy* of his *Grace*, and therefore

Apud Orig. l. 2.

fore afford them all *rational convictions* in order to it. And therefore the quality of our *Saviour's miracles* was *considerable* as well as the *greatness of them.* The *intent* of them all was to *do good*, and thereby to bring the *world* off from its *sin* and *folly*, to the *embracing* of that *holy doctrine* which he came to publish to the world.

Now that such a *power* of *miracles* in our *Saviour* had the greatest subserviency to the giving full and *convincing evidence* that he was the *person* he declared himself to *be*, and that his *doctrine* was thereby so clearly attested, that it was nothing but *obstinacy*, which could withhold *assent*, will appear by these following Hypotheses which I lay down in order to the proving it. *Sect.* 2.

Where the truth of a doctrine depends not on the evidence of the things themselves, but on the authority of him that reveals it, there the only way to prove the doctrine to be true, is to prove the Testimony of him that revealed it to be infallible. Several things are necessary to be proved for the clearing this *proposition.* 1. *Hypoth.*

1. *That it is not repugnant to reason that a doctrine should be true which depends not upon the evidence of the thing it self.* By *evidence* of the *thing* I understand so *clear* and *distinct* a *perception* of it, that every *one* who hath the *use* of his *rational faculties*, cannot but upon the *first apprehension* of the *terms* yield a *certain assent* to it; as *that the whole is greater than a part*; *that if we take away equal things from equal, the remainder must be equal.* Now we are to *observe*, that as to all these *common notices* of *humane nature* which *carry* such *evidence* with them, the *certainty* of them *lies* in the *proposition* as it is an *act* of the *mind abstracted* from the *things themselves*; for *these* do not *suppose* the *existence* of the *things*; but whether there be any such *things* in the world or no as *whole* or *parts*, the *understanding* is *assured* that the *Idea* of the *whole* carries more in its *representation* than that of a *part* does. This is the great *reason* of the *certainty* and *evidence* of *Mathematical* truths, not as some *imagine*, because *men* have no *interest*, or *design*, in those *things*, and therefore they never *question* them, but because they *proceed* not upon *sensible* but *abstracted matter*, which is not *liable* to so many *doubts* as the *other* is; for that a *Triangle* hath three *Angles* no man *questions*; but whether such *sensible parts* of *matter* make a *Triangle*, may be very *questionable.* Now that the *truth*

of

of *beings*, or the *certainty* of *exiſtence* of *things* cannot be ſo certain as *Mathematical demonſtrations*, appears from hence: becauſe the *manner* of *conveyance* of theſe *things* to my *mind* cannot be ſo *clear* and *certain* as in purely *intellectual operations*, *abſtracted* from *exiſtent matter*. For the higheſt *evidences* of the *exiſtence* of things muſt be either the *judgment* of *ſenſe*, or *clear* and *diſtinct perception* of the *mind*; now proceeding in a mere *natural way*, there can be no *infallible certainty* in either of *theſe*; For the *perception* of the *mind* in reference to the *exiſtence* of *things* being cauſed ſo much through thoſe *Idea's* or *Phantaſms* which are *conveyed* to the *underſtanding* through the *impreſſions* of *ſenſe*, if theſe may be *demonſtrated* to be *fallacious*, I may well queſtion the *certainty* of that, which I am certain I have been *deceived* by; *ſuppoſing* then I ſhould *queſtion* the *truth* of every *thing* which is *conveyed* in an *uncertain* way to my *mind*, I may ſoon *out-go* even *Pyrrho* himſelf in real *Scepticiſm*. Neither can I conceive how *clear* and *diſtinct perception* of any *thing* though not *coming* through the *ſenſes*, doth neceſſarily *inferr* the *exiſtence* of the *thing*; for it only implies a *non-repugnancy* of it to our *natural faculties*, and *conſequently* the bare *poſſibility* of it. For otherwiſe it were *impoſſible* for us to have a *clear perception* of any *thing* any *longer* than it *exiſts*; nay, than we *know* it to *exiſt*; for *exiſtence* or *non-exiſtence* is all *one* to the *underſtanding*, while it is not *aſſured* of either. And it is withall *evident* that *things imaginary* may clearly *affect* the *mind* as well as *real*, for I may have as *real* and diſtinct *perception* of a *Phœnix* in my *mind*, as of a *Partridge*; doth it therefore *follow* that the *one* is really *exiſtent* as well as the *other?* and it will be a very hard *matter* to *aſſign* a certain *difference* between *imagination* and pure *intellection* in ſuch *things*, which though not actually *exiſtent*, yet imply no *repugnancy* at all to the *faculkies* of mens *minds*. It is evident then, that there cannot be ſo great *certainty* of the *exiſtence* of things as there may be of *Mathematical demonſtrations*.

Sect. 3. And if that *principle* be *ſuppoſed* as the *foundation* of all *Phyſical certainty* as to the *being of things*, viz. that there is a *God* who being *infinitely good* will not *ſuffer* the *minds* of *men* to be *deceived* in thoſe *things* which they have a *clear* and diſtinct *perception* of (without which *ſuppoſition* we cannot be *aſſured* of the *certainty* of any *operations* of the *mind*, becauſe we cannot *know*

but

but we were ſo *made* that we might be then moſt *deceived*, when we thought our *ſelves* moſt *ſure:)* If this *principle*, I ſay, be ſuppoſed as the foundation of all certain knowledge, then from it I *inferr* many *things* which are very much *advantageous* to our *certainty* in *matters* of *faith.*

That the foundation of all certainty lies in the neceſſary exiſtence of a being abſolutely perfect. So that unleſs I know that there is a *God*, I cannot be *aſſured* that I know any *thing* in a certain *manner*; and if I *know* there is a *God*, I muſt neceſſarily *apprehend* him to be *abſolutely perfect*; becauſe the *grounds* of my *knowledge*, that there is a *God*, are from thoſe abſolute *perfections*, which there are in him; and if I could *ſuppoſe* him not *abſolutely perfect*, I muſt ſuppoſe *him* not to be *God*; for that is neceſſarily implied in his *definition.* Now then if all *certainty* doth ſuppoſe the *exiſtence* of a *being* ſo *abſolutely perfect*, I muſt, before I can *know* any thing *certainly*, conclude that there is an *infinity* of *knowledge*, *wiſdom*, *power* and *goodneſs* in this *God*; for thoſe are *things* which all who *underſtand* them will grant to be *perfections*; and if they be in *God*, they muſt be *abſolute*, i.e. *infinite.* And if they be *infinite*, it neceſſarily *follows* that they muſt *tranſcend* our *apprehenſions*; ſo that now we have *gained* this *principle* in *order* to *faith*, that we muſt grant *ſomething* to be *unconceivable* before we can come *certainly* to *know* any thing. From whence it follows that thoſe who will not *believe* any thing to *be true* becauſe it is above their *apprehenſions*, muſt deny the *foundation* of all *certainty*, which (as we have proved) doth *ſuppoſe ſomething* to be *infinite*, or above our *capacity* to *comprehend.* 1.

That we have as great certainty of what-ever is revealed to us from God, as we can have of the truth of any thing which we moſt clearly underſtand. For the *truth* of knowledge *depending* on this *ſuppoſition*, That there is a *God* whoſe *goodneſs* will not *ſuffer* us to be *deceived* in the *things* we *clearly underſtand*; there is the ſame *foundation* for the *act* of *faith* as for *that* of *knowledge*, viz. *That God will not ſuffer us to be deceived in matters which himſelf hath revealed to us.* Nay there ſeems to be far *greater* on theſe *accounts.* Firſt, *That there is not ſo great danger to be deceived* in reference to *objects* of *ſenſe*, as there is in reference to *objects* of *Divine revelation*: becauſe *objects* of *ſenſe* make a *continual impreſſion* upon the *Organs* of *ſenſe*; and as to theſe *things* Sect. 4 2.

things we ſee the whole *world* agrees in them ſo far as they are *neceſſary* to *life*, and withall they *bear* a greater *correſpondency* to the preſent *ſtate* of *imperfection* which the *ſoul* is now in: but now *matters* of *Divine revelation* are of a more *ſublime* and *ſpiritual nature*, which mens *minds* on that *account* are more *apt* to *doubt* of, than of *things obvious* to *ſenſe*; and withall they *call* the *mind* ſo much off from *ſenſe* that on theſe *accounts* the *proneneſs* to *doubt* is *greater*, and therefore the *foundation* of *certainty* from God's not *ſuffering* us to be *deceived* muſt be *ſtronger*. Secondly, *There is not ſo great danger in being deceived* as to *matters* of *ſenſe* or *knowledge*, as there is in *things* of *Divine revelation*. For we ſee, granting *ſenſe* to be deceived, and that we have no *certainty* at all in *natural* things, yet *affairs* of life are *managed* ſtill; men's outward *welfare depends* not on the *judgment* of *ſenſe*; the *merchant* hath never the leſs *gold* in his *Ship* becauſe his *ſenſe deceives* him in judging that the *earth* moves from *him*, when the *Ship* moves from *it* The *Sun* doth nevertheleſs *inlighten* the *world*, though our *ſenſes* be all of *Epicurus* his *mind*, that the *Sun* is no *bigger* than he ſeems to be; but now as to matters of *Divine revelation*, they are *things* of the moſt *unſpeakable weight* and *importance*, which *depend* upon our *believing* or *disbelieving* them. And therefore if the *goodneſs* of *God* be ſuch as it will not ſuffer us to be *deceived* in our *judgment* of *material* and *ſenſible beings*, how much *leſs* in reference to the *foundation* of our *certainty* as to *things Divinely* revealed? We ſee then what *rational evidence* there is not only *conſiſtent* with, but neceſſarily *implied* in the *foundation* of *faith*, even as *great* as in any *thing* which we do moſt *perfectly know*; ſo that the *in-evidence* which is ſo much ſpoken of as an *ingredient* of the *nature* of *faith*, muſt not be underſtood of the *foundation* whereon the *act* of *faith* doth *ſtand*, but of the *condition* of the *object*, which being a *matter* of *divine revelation*, is a *thing not obvious* to our *ſenſes*:

Heb. 11. 1. In which ſence the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks, that *faith* is ἐλπιζομένων ὑπόστασις, πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων, *the firm expectation of things hoped for, and ſtrong conviction of things which are not ſeen:* In which words, as *Eraſmus* well obſerves, is contained only an high *Encomium* of *faith*, and no *dialectical definition* of it; viz. that *faith ſoars* above things of *ſenſe* or *preſent enjoyment*; yea, though the *objects* of *it* be never ſo *remote* from

either,

either, yet where there is *sufficient evidences* of *divine revelation*, *faith boggles* at no *difficulties*, but is firmly *resolved* that that *God* who hath *revealed* these *things*, can and will bring *them* to *pass* in his own time. There is not then any such *contrariety* between the *foundation* of *faith* and *knowledge*, as the *Schoolmen* have perswaded the *world*; we see both of them *proceed* on the same *foundation* of *certainty*; all the difference is, *faith fixeth* on the *veracity* of *God* immediately in reference to a *divine testimony*; *knowledge proceeds* upon it, supposing no *divine revelation* as to the *things* it doth *discover*.

We hence inferr, that if the certainty of our *knowledge* depends on this *principle*, that *God* will not suffer us to be *deceived*, *then we are bound to believe whatever God doth reveal to us, though we may not be able to comprehend the nature of the things revealed.* For as to these things, we have the same *ground* of *certainty* which we have as to any *natural causes*, for as to them, we now *suppose* from the former *principle*, that setting *aside* the *existence* of *God*, we could have no *certainty* of them, but that the *formal reason* of our *certainty is resolved* into this, that *God's goodness will not suffer the understanding to be deceived* as to these things; the same I say as to *spiritual mysteries revealed* by *God*; the *ground* of our *certainty* lies not in the *evidence* of the *things*, but in the *undoubted veracity* of *God*, who hath *revealed* them. All that I can imagine possible to be replied to this, is, *That God's veracity assures us in natural causes that we are not deceived, only where we have a clear and distinct perception of the things, but now in matters above our reason to comprehend, there can be no clear and distinct perception.* To this I *answer*, *Sect.* 5. 3.

First, It is *evident* in the *foundation* of all *certainty* of knowledge, that there may be a *clear* and *distinct perception* of that which we cannot *comprehend*, viz. *of a being absolutely perfect*; for if we have not a *clear* and *distinct perception* of *God*, the *foundation* of all *certainty* is destroyed, which is the *necessary existence* of such a *being*; and he that shall say he cannot have a clear *perception* of *God* without *comprehending* him, doth *contradict* himself; for if he be a *being infinite*, he must be *incomprehensible*; therefore there may be *clear perception*, where the *object* it self is above our *capacity*. Now whatever *foundation* there is in *nature* for such a *perception* without *comprehension*; 1.

that and much *more* is there in ſuch *things* as are *revealed* by *God*, though *above* our *apprehenſion*: For the *Idea* of *God* upon the *ſoul* of *man* cannot be ſo *ſtrong* an *evidence* of the *exiſtence* of a *being* above our *apprehenſion*, as the *revelation* of *matters* of *faith* is, that we ſhould *believe* the *things* ſo *revealed* though our *underſtandings* loſe themſelves in *ſtriving* to *reach* the *natures* of them, and the *manner* of their *exiſtence*.

2. *Secondly*, That which is the only *foundation* of a *ſcruple* in this *caſe*, is a *principle* moſt *unreaſonable* in it ſelf, *that we are to imbrace nothing for truth, though divinely revealed, but what our reaſon is able to comprehend as to the nature of the thing, and the manner of its exiſtence*; on which account the *doctrine* of the *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, *Satisfaction*, and conſequently the whole *myſtery* of the *Goſpel* of *Chriſt* muſt be *rejected* as *incredible*, and that on this bare *pretence*, becauſe although many expreſſions in *Scripture* ſeem to *import* all theſe *things*, yet we are bound to *interpret* them to another *ſence*, becauſe this is *incongruous* to our *reaſon*. But although *Chriſtianity* be a *Religion* which comes in the higheſt *way* of *credibility* to the *minds* of *men*, although we are not *bound* to *believe* any *thing* but what we have ſufficient *reaſon* to make it appear that it is *revealed* by *God*, yet that any thing ſhould *be queſtioned* whether it be of *divine revelation*, merely becauſe our *reaſon* is to ſeek, as to the *full* and *adæquate conception* of it, is a moſt *abſurd* and *unreaſonable pretence*: And the Aſſertors of it muſt run themſelves on theſe unavoidable abſurdities.

1. *Firſt*, *Of believing nothing either in nature or Religion to be true, but what they can give a full and ſatisfactory account of, as to every mode and circumſtance of it.* Therefore let ſuch perſons firſt try themſelves in all the *appearances* of *nature*; and then we may ſuppoſe they will not *believe* that the *Sun* ſhines, till they have by *demonſtrative arguments* proved the *undoubted truth* of the *Ptolomaick* or *Copernican hypotheſis*; that they will never give credit to the *flux* and *reflux* of the *Sea*, till they *clearly reſolve* the *doubts* which attend the ſeveral *opinions* of it. That there is no ſuch *thing* as *matter* in the *world*, till they can *ſatisfactorily* tell us how the *parts* of it are *united*; nor that there are any *material beings*, till they have *reſolved* all the *perplexing difficulties* about the ſeveral *affections* of *them*; and that *themſelves* have not ſo much as a *rational ſoul*, till they

they are bound to *satisfie* us of the *manner* of the *union* of the *soul* and *body* together. And if they can *expedite* all these, and many more *difficulties* about the most *obvious* things (about which it is another thing to frame *handsome* and *consistent hypotheses*, than to give a certain *account* of them) then let them be let *loose* to the *matters* of *divine revelation*; as to which yet (if they could perform the other) there were no *reason* for such an *undertaking*; for that were,

2. *Secondly, To commensurate the Perfections of God with the narrow capacity of the humane intellect*; which is contrary to the natural *Idea* of *God*; and to the *manner* whereby we take up our *conceptions* of *God*; for the *Idea* of *God* doth suppose *incomprehensibility* to belong to his *nature*; and the *manner* whereby we form our *conceptions* of *God*, is, by taking away all the *imperfections* we find in our *selves*, from the *conception* we *form* of a *being absolutely perfect*, and by *adding infinity* to all the *perfections* we find in our own *natures*. Now this *method* of *proceeding* doth necessarily *imply* a vast *distance* and *disproportion* between a *finite* and *infinite understanding*. And if the *understanding* of *God* be *infinite*, why may not he *discover* such *things* to us, which our *shallow apprehensions* cannot reach unto? what *ground* or *evidence* of *reason* can we have that an *infinite wisdom* and *understanding*, when it undertakes to *discover matters* of the *highest nature* and *concernment* to the *world*, should be able to deliver *nothing* but what *comes* within the *compass* of our *imperfect* and *narrow intellects*? And that it should not be sufficient that the *matters revealed* do none of them *contradict* the *prime results* or *common notions* of *mankind* (which none of them do) but that every particular *mode* and *circumstance*, as to the *manner* of existence in *God*, or the *extent* of his *omnipotent power*, must pass the *scrutiny* of our *faculties*, before it obtains a *place* for a *divine revelation*?

Sect. 6. 3. *Thirdly*, It must follow from this *principle, That the pretenders to it must affirm the rules or maxims which they go by in the judgment of things, are the infallible standard of reason*: Else they are as far to seek in the *judgment* of the *truth* of things as any others are. They must then, to be consistent with their *principle, affirm* themselves to be the absolute Masters of *reason*: Now *reason* consisting of *observations* made concerning the *natures* of all *beings*, for so it must be *considered*, as it is

a *rule* of *judging*. viz. as a *Syſtem* of *infallible rules* collected from the *natures* of *things*) they who pretend to it, muſt *demonſtrate* theſe general *maxims* according to which they judge, to be *collected* from an univerſal undoubted *hiſtory* of *nature*, which lies yet too *dark* and *obſcure* for any to pretend to the *full knowledge* of, and would be only a *demonſtration* of the higheſt *arrogance* after ſo many *unſucceſsful endeavours*, of the moſt *ſearching wits* in any *ſociety* of *perſons* to *uſurp* it to themſelves, eſpecially if ſuch *perſons* are ſo far from *ſearching* into the *depths* of nature, that they ſuffer themſelves very fairly to be *led* by the *noſe* by the moſt *dogmatical* of all *Philoſophers*; and that in ſuch *principles* which the more *inquiſitive world* hath now found to be very *ſhort*, *uncertain* and *fallacious*. And upon *ſevere enquiry* we ſhall find the grand *principles* which have been taken by theſe *adorers* of *reaſon*, for almoſt the *ſtandard* of it, have been ſome *Theories* which have been taken up merely from *obſervation* of the *courſe* of *nature* by ſuch *perſons*, who ſcarce *owned* any hand of *providence* in the world. Now it cannot otherwiſe be conceived but that theſe *theories* or *principles* formed from ſuch a *narrow inſpection* into the *natures* of *things*, muſt make ſtrange work when we come to *apply thoſe things* to *them*, which were never *looked* at in the *forming* of them: Whence came thoſe *two* received *principles*, *that nothing can be produced out of nothing*; that *there is no poſſible return from a privation to a habit*, but from thoſe *Philoſophers* who believed there was *nothing* but *matter* in the world; or if they did aſſert the *exiſtence* of a *God*, yet ſuppoſed him *unconcerned* in the *Government* of the *world*. Whence come our *Maſters* of *reaſon* to tell us *that the ſoul cannot ſubſiſt after death without the body*? from what *Philoſophy* was this *derived*? certainly from *that* which was very loth to acknowledge the *immortality* of the *ſoul* of *man*: And any one who ſtrictly *obſerves* the cloſe *coherence* of the *principles* of the *Peripatetick Philoſophy* will find very little *room left* for an *eternal being* to *interpoſe it ſelf* in the *world*; and therefore ſome have ſhrewdly obſerved that *Ariſtotle* ſpeaks more favourably of the *being* of *God* in his *Exotericks*, than in his *Acromaticks*, which all that know the *reaſon* of the *names*, will gueſs at the *reaſon* of. I demand then, muſt the received *principles* of *Philoſophy*, and thoſe ſhort *imperfect Theories*, which were *formed* more from *tradition* than *experience*,

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by the ancient *Greeks*, be taken from the *standard* of *reason* or no? If they must, we may soon *forsake* not only the *sublimer mysteries* of the *Trinity*, *Divinity* of *Christ*, *Resurrection*, &c. but we shall soon shake *hands* with *Creation*, *Providence*, if not *immortality* of *souls*, and the *Being* of *God* himself. If these things be *disowned* as the *standard* of *reason*, let us know what will be *substituted* in the *room* of them; and what *Laws* our *faith* must be tryed by. Are they only *Mathematical demonstrations*, or the *undoubted common notions* of *humane nature*, which whosoever understands *assents* to *them*? let any of the forementioned *mysteries* be made appear to *contradict* these, and we will readily yield up our selves *captives* to *reason*: But in the mean time let no *jejune unproved Hypotheses* in *Philosophy*, be set as *Judges* over *matters* of *faith*, whose only *warrant* for that *office* must be *Stat pro ratione voluntas*. Let the *principles* we proceed by, be *first manifested* to be *collected* from a most *certain* and *universal inspection* into the *nature* of all *beings*, let the *manner* of *process* be *shewed* how they were *collected* (lest they labour with the common *fault* of the *Chymists*, of establishing *hypostatical principles* from the *experiments* of some particular *bodies*, which *others* do as evidently *refute*) and *lastly*, let it be made *appear* that these *principles*, thus *collected*, will serve *indifferently* for all *beings*, *spiritual* as well as *material*, *infinite* as well as *finite*, and when this *Task* is exactly performed, we will make *room* for *Reason* to *sit* upon the *Bench*, and bring the *Scripture* as the *Prisoner* to its *Bar*.

Fourthly, According to this *principle*, *what certainty can we have at all of any thing we are to believe?* who hath *fixed* the *bounds* of that which men call *reason*? how shall we know that *thus far it will come, and no further*? If no *banks* be *raised* against it to *keep* it in its due *channel*, we may have *cause* to *fear* it may in *time overthrow* not only the *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, *Resurrection of the dead*, but all other *articles* of the *Creed* too? What *prescription* can be pleaded by one sort of *men* for *reason* more than for *another*? One will not *believe* this *article* of his *faith*, because against his *reason*; and why not *another* reject *another article* on the same *pretence*? for whatever the *ground* of *unbelief* be, if it be but *baptized* by the name of *reason*, it must by this *principle* pass *uncontrouled*; Sect. 7. 4.

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if a ſullen *Philoſopher* ſhall tell us, that the *notion* of an *immaterial ſubſtance contradicts* his *reaſon* as much as the *Trinity* doth *theirs*, and that the *Univerſe* is *nothing elſe* but a *Syſtem* of *bodies*, by what *Artifice* will our *Maſter* of *reaſon purge* away all that *black choler*, that ſo *clouds* his *mind*, that he cannot ſee the *notion* of a *ſpirit* through it? And ſuch a one will make a hard *ſhift*, but he will *reconcile* his *opinion* with *Scripture* too; and therefore why ſhould he be bound up to mens *explications* of *Scripture*, when there is no *neceſſity*, that he can ſee, of *underſtanding* it in any other way than his own? If another ſhould come and tell us, that we muſt be all *Anthropomorphites*, and that otherwiſe the *Scripture* were not *intelligible*; ſhall not this *man* put in for reaſon too? Nay, *laſtly*, if another ſhall come and ſpeak out, and tell us *Religion* is but a *device* of *ſubtle men*, that all *things* come to *paſs* through *chance*, that the *world* was made by a *fortuitous concourſe* of *Atoms*, and that all are *fools* which are not *Atheiſts*, and that it is impoſſible to *apprehend* the *Being* of a *God*, and therefore by the ſame *reaſon* that they reject ſome *myſteries* of *Religion*, he rejects the *foundation* of all; becauſe an *infinite being* is *incomprehenſible*: whither now hath our Reaſon carried us? while we pretend to *reject* any thing as *divinely revealed*, merely on that *account*, that it is *above our reaſon*? But it may be replied, *On what account then do we reject the Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, and the ubiquity of the body of Chriſt*, as *repugnant to reaſon, if we do not make reaſon judge in matters of faith*? I anſwer, 1. We reject theſe *opinions* not only as *repugnant* to *reaſon*, but as *inſufficiently* proved from *Scripture*, whereas we here ſuppoſe (it not being our preſent buſineſs to prove it) that the ſeveral *Doctrines* of the *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, *Reſurrection of bodies*, &c. are only *rejected* on that *account*, that though *Scripture* ſeems to ſpeak *fair* for them, yet it is otherwiſe to be *interpreted*, becauſe *ſuppoſed* to be *repugnant* to *reaſon*. 2. Thoſe *Doctrines* before mentioned are eminently *ſerviceable* to *promote* the *great end* of the *Goſpel*, and are *inlaid* in the very *foundation* of it, as that of the *Trinity*, and *Divinity* of *Chriſt*; but theſe we now mention are no ways *conduceable* to that *end*; but ſeem to *thwart* and *overthrow* it, and *Tranſubſtantiation* eſtabliſheth a *way* of *worſhip* contrary to the *Goſpel*. 3. All the *foundation*

tion of *Transubstantiation* is laid upon ambiguous *places* of *Scripture*, which must of *necessity* have *some Tropes* and *Figures* in them; but the *Doctrine* of the *Trinity* is not only *contained* in plain *Scripture*, but is *evidenced* by visible *appearance*, as particularly at the *baptism* of our *Saviour*. 4. There is far greater *ground* why *we* should reject *Transubstantiation* and *ubiquity*, as *inconsistent* with reason, than that *they* should the *Trinity*, on this account, because the *grounds* of *reason* on which we *reject* those *opinions*, are *fetched* from those *essential* and *inseparable properties* of *bodies*, which are *inconsistent* with those *opinions*; now these are things within the *reach* of our *understandings* (in which case *God* himself sometimes *appeals to reason*) but it is quite another *case*, when we *search* into the *incomprehensible nature of God*, and *pronounce* with *confidence* that such *things* cannot be in *God*, because we cannot *comprehend* them; which gives a *sufficient answer* to this *objection*. The substance then of this discourse is, that whatever *Doctrine* is sufficiently *manifested* to be of *divine revelation*, is to be *embraced* and *believed* as *undoubtedly true*, though our *reason* cannot *reach* to the full *apprehension* of all the *Modes* and *Circumstances* of it. So that as to these sublime mysteries our *faith* stands upon this twofold *bottom*. First, *That the being, understanding, and power of God doth infinitely transcend ours, and therefore he may reveal to us matters above our reach and capacity.* Secondly, *That whatever God doth reveal is undoubtedly true, though we may not fully understand it*; for this is a most undoubted principle, that *God* cannot and will not *deceive* any in those *things* which he *reveals* to men. Thus our first *supposition* is cleared, *that it is not repugnant to reason, that a doctrine may be true, which depends not on the evidence of the thing it self.*

The *second* is, *That in matters whose truth depends not on the evidence of the things themselves, infallible testimony is the fullest demonstration of them.* For these things, not being of *Mathematical evidence*, there must be some other *way* found out for *demonstrating* the *truth* of them. And in all those *things whose truth* depends on *Testimony*, the more *creditable* the *Testimony* is, the higher *evidence* is given to them; but that *Testimony* which may *deceive*, cannot give so *pregnant* an *evidence* as that which cannot; for then all imaginable

objections

objections are taken off. This is ſo clear, that it needs no further *proof*; and therefore the *third* follows.

3. *That there are certain ways whereby to know that a Teſtimony delivered is infallible*; and that is fully proved by theſe two Arguments. 1. That it is the *duty* of all *thoſe* to whom it is *propounded* to *believe* it; now how could that be a *duty* in them to *believe*, which they had no *ways* to know whether it were a *Teſtimony* to be *believed*, or no? 2. Becauſe *God* will *condemn* the *world* for *unbelief*: In which the Juſtice of *God's proceedings* doth neceſſarily *ſuppoſe* that there were *ſufficient arguments* to *induce* them to *believe*, which could not be, unleſs there were ſome *certain way ſuppoſed* whereby a *Teſtimony* may be known to be *infallible*. Theſe three *things* now being *ſuppoſed*, viz. *that a Doctrine may be true which depends not on evidence of reaſon; that the greateſt demonſtration of the truth of ſuch a Doctrine, is its being delivered by infallible Teſtimony; and that there are certain ways whereby a Teſtimony may be known to be infallible*, Our firſt *principle* is fully confirmed, which was, *that where the truth of a Doctrine depends not on evidence of reaſon, but on the authority of him that reveals it, the only way to prove the Doctrine to be true, is to prove the Teſtimony of him that reveals it to be infallible.*

Sect. 8. *Hyp.* 2. The next principle or Hypotheſis which I lay down, is, *That there can be no greater evidence that a Teſtimony is infallible, than that it is the Teſtimony of God himſelf.* The truth of this depends upon a *common notion* of *humane nature*, which is the *veracity* of *God* in whatever way he diſcovers himſelf to men; and therefore the *ultimate reſolution* of our *faith*, as to its *formal object*, muſt be alone into the *veracity* of *God revealing* things unto us; for the *principium certitudinis*, or *foundation* of all *certain* aſſent can be *fetched* no *higher*, neither will it ſtand any lower than the *infallible verity* of *God* himſelf; and the *principium patefactionis*, or the *ground* of *diſcovery* of *ſpiritual truth* to our *minds muſt* be *reſolved* into *Divine Teſtimony*, or *Revelation*. Theſe two then not taken *aſunder*, but joyntly, *God, who cannot lye, hath revealed theſe things*, is the only *certain foundation* for a *divine faith* to reſt it ſelf upon. But now the particular exerciſe of a *Divine faith* lies in a *firm aſſent* to ſuch a *particular thing*

thing as *Divinely revealed*, and herein lies not so much the *Testimony*, as the *peculiar energy* of the *Spirit* of *God* in *inclining* the soul to *believe* peculiar *objects* of *faith*, as of *Divine revelation*. But the general *ground* of *faith*, which they call the *formal object*, or the *ratio propter quam credimus* is the general *infallibility* of a *Divine Testimony*. For in a *matter* concerning *divine revelation*, there are two great *questions* to be *resolved*; The first is, *Why I believe a Divine Testimony* with a *firm assent*? The answer to that is, *Because I am assured, that whatever God speaks is true*: the other is, *upon what grounds do I believe this to be a Divine Testimony*? the resolution of which, as far as I can *understand*, must be *fetched* from those *rational evidences* whereby a *Divine Testimony* must be *distinguished* from *one* merely *humane* and *fallible*. For the *Spirit* of *God* in its *workings* upon the *mind*, doth not carry it on by a *brutish impulse*, but *draws* it by a *spiritual discovery* of such *strong* and *perswasive* grounds to assent to what is *revealed*, that the *mind* doth *readily* give a *firm assent* to *that* which it sees such *convincing reason* to *believe*. Now the strongest *reason* to *believe*, is the *manifestation* of a *divine Testimony*; which the *Spirit* of *God* so clearly *discovers* to a true *believer*, that he not only *firmly assents* to the general *foundation* of *faith*, the *veracity* of *God*, but to the particular *object propounded*, *as a matter of Divine Revelation*. But this latter *question* is not here the *matter* of our *discourse*; our *proposition* only *concerns* the general *foundation* of *faith*, which appears to be so *rational* and *evident*, as no *principle* in *nature* can be *more*. For if the *Testimony* on which I am to rely be only *God's*, and I be assured from *natural reason*, that his *Testimony* can be no other than *infallible*, wherein doth the *certainty* of the *foundation* of *faith* fall short of that in *any Mathematical demonstration*? Upon which account a *Divine Testimony* hath been *regarded* with so much *veneration* among all who have *owned* a *Deity*, although they have been unacquainted with any certain *way* of *Divine revelation*. And the reason why any *rejected* such a *Testimony* among the *Heathens*, was either, because they *believed* not a *Deity*, or else that the particular *Testimonies* produced were mere *frauds* and *impostures*, and therefore no *Divine Testimony* as it was given out to be. But the *principle* still remained *indisputable*,

that on *ſuppoſition* the *Teſtimony* were what it pretended to be, there was the greateſt *reaſon* to *believe* it, although it came not in ſuch a *way* of *probation*, as their *ſciences* proceeded in. From which *principle* aroſe that ſpeech of *Tully* which he hath tranſlated out of *Plato's Timæus*, *Ac difficillimum factu a Diis ortis fidem non habere, quanquam nec argumentis nec rationibus certis eorum oratio confirmetur.* By which we ſee what a *preſumption* there was of *Truth*, where there was any *evidence* of a *Divine Teſtimony*. And no doubt upon the *advantage* of this *principle* it was the *Devil* gained ſo great *credit* to his *oracles*; for therein he did the moſt *imitate divine revelation*. From hence then we ſee what a firm *bottom faith* in the general ſtands upon, which is nothing ſhort of an *Infallible Divine Teſtimony*: other things may conduce by way of *ſubſerviency* for the *diſcovery* of this; but nothing elſe can be a ſure *foundation* for a *Divine faith*, but what is a *Teſtimony* of *God* himſelf.

In fragment. Cicer.

Sect. 9. Hyp. 3. *A Teſtimony may be known to be divine and infallible, though God himſelf do not ſpeak in an immediate way.* By being known, I do not mean the firm *perſwaſion* of a *mind inlightned* by the *Spirit* of *God*, but that there are ſufficient *evidences ex parte rei* to *convince* men of it, which are not wilfully *blind* and *obſtinate*, *i.e.* that the *ground* of *unbelief* in any cannot be *imputed* to the defect of *ſufficient motives* to *faith*, but to their own *perverſneſs* and *prejudice* in not *diſcerning* them. Now that *God* may reveal and declare his *mind* to the world, not in an *immediate way*, but by ſome *inſtruments* he may make *uſe* of to that *end*, is not only *evident* from the great *ſuitableneſs* of ſuch a way to the *conditions* of the *perſons* he *ſpeaks* to, but from the general *perſwaſion* of the *world* concerning the *poſſibility* of *Inſpiration*. The *Jews* are ſo far from *denying* this, that it is the very *foundation* of their *religion* as well as *ours*, *God diſcovering* the *moſt* of his will to them by the *Prophets* or by *perſons Divinely inſpired*. And the general *conſent* of all other *Nations*, that there is ſuch a principle as *Divination* in the *world*, doth make it *evident*, that it *carries* no *repugnancy* at all to *natural light*, ſuppoſing that there is a *God*, that he ſhould *reveal* his *mind* by ſome *particular perſons* unto the world. For which purpoſe the *Teſtimony* of *Tully* in the entrance of his *Books de Divinatione*,

natione, is very *considerable*. *Vetus opinio est jam usque ab Heroicis ducta temporibus, eaque & populi Romani & omnium gentium firmata consensu, versari quandam inter homines divinationem, quam Græci μαντικὴν appellant*, i. e. *præsensionem & scientiam rerum futurarum*; and soon after adds, *gentem quidem nullam video neque tam humanam atque doctam, neque tam immanem atque barbaram, quæ non significari futura, & a quibusdam intelligi, prædicique posse censeat.* He makes it appear to be an universal *sentiment* of all *Nations* in the *world*, and *instanceth* particularly in the *Assyrians*, *Ægyptians*, *Cilicians*, *Pisidians*, *Pamphylians*, *Grecians*, *Romans*, *Etrurians*, and others. It is *true* indeed he after *mentions* some *Philosophers* who denyed it; but they were most *part* the *followers* of *Epicurus*, who denyed any *providence*, and therefore might well take away *divination*; but if *Xenophanes Colophonius* had any *followers* who asserted the one, and denyed the other (as *Tully* seems to intimate that he was alone in that *perswasion*) yet we may probably *suppose* the *reason* of their *rejecting* it might be the *impostures* which went under the name of *Divination* among them; which are excellently discovered by that *Prince* of *Roman Philosophers* as well as *Orators*, in his *second book* of *Divination*; but it is apparent by the same *Author*, that the *generality* of *Philosophers consented* with the people in this *perswasion*, as the *followers* of those three great *Sects* of *Socrates*, *Pythagoras*, and *Aristotle* were all *approvers* of it; but of all *persons* the *Stoicks* were the most *zealous* contenders for it, especially *Chrysippus*, *Diogenes Babylonius*, *Antipater* and *Possidonius*: some indeed *rejected* some ways of *Divination*, yet embraced others, as *Dicæarchus* and *Cratippus*, who rejected all but *dreams* and *ecstasies*; but in the *general* we find these two *principles* went together among them, the *existence* of a *Deity*, and the *certainty* of *Divination*; so that from *Divination* they proved a *Deity*, and from a *Deity Divination*. *Si sunt genera divinandi vera, esse Deos*; *vicissimque si Dii sint, esse qui divinent*, as *Quintus Cicero* there speaks: and at last thus *triumphs* in the *multitude* of his *witnesses*, *An dum bestiæ loquantur expectamus, hominum consentiente auctoritate contemti non simus*? It may not be amiss to produce the chief argument on which the *Stoicks* insisted to prove the *necessity* of *Divination*, supposing the existence of a *Deity*. *If there* L. 1. *de Div.*

be Gods, say they, *and they do not reveal to men things to come, it either is because they do not love them, or because they do not know themselves what shall come to pass, or they think it is of no concernment to men to know future things, or that it doth not become their Majesty to reveal them, or that they cannot reveal them to men if they would; but neither is it true that they do not love men; for the Gods are of a bountiful nature and friends to mankind, neither can they be ignorant of future things, because they are appointed and decreed by them, neither is it of no concernment to men to know future things; for that makes them more cautious if they know them; neither is it repugnant to their Majesty to reveal them, for nothing is more noble than bounty and doing good; and they must needs know these things; therefore they may make them known to others; and if they do make them known, there must be some way whereby to know that they do so; or else they signifie them to no purpose.* If now instead of the *knowledge* of *future contingencies*, and the *multitude* of their *Gods*, they had *insisted* on the *discovery* and *revelation* by the *true God* of those *ways*, which may *lead* men to *eternal happiness*, that *argument* had been *strong* and *convincing*, which as it stands is *Sophistical* and *fallacious*. So that it is very *plain*, that not only a *possibility* of *Divination* was *acknowledged* by those who wanted *Divine revelation*, but that this *divination* did not *arise* from mere *natural causes*, but from an *afflatus Divinus*, and a *concitatio quædam animi*, as they there *speak*, which imports nothing short of *Divine inspiration*. Nay the *opinion* of this was so *common* among them, that they thought any *extraordinary persons* had something of Divine *Enthusiasm* in them, as *Tully* elsewhere tells us, *Nemo vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu Divino unquam fuit.* Although then these *Heathens* were greatly *mistaken* as to those *things* they took for a *Divine afflatus* and *Divination*, yet we cannot conceive so general a *sence* should be *imprinted* on the *minds* of *men* of such a *thing* as that *was*, were it not a *thing highly consonant* to *principles* of *reason*, that *God* should *communicate* his *mind* to the *world* by the *inspiration of some persons*. And therefore I conceive that *Cicero* and his brother *Quintus*, who *manage* that *excellent dispute* of *Divination* between them, have divided the *truth* between them too. For on the one side *Quintus* evidently proves the *possibility* of the *thing*,

L. 2. de Nat. Deorum.

thing, the *consequence* of it upon the *acknowledgment* of a *Deity*, and the *general consent* of *mankind* in the *owning* of it; and on the other side *Tully* himself *excellently* lays open the *vanity*, *folly*, and *uncertainty*, not only of the common *ways* of *Divination*, but of the *oracles* which were in such great *esteem* among the *Heathens*. And although *Tully* doth so *sharply* and *sarcastically answer* the *argument* from the *common consent* of men; *quasi vero quidquam sit tam valde, quam nihil sapere, vulgare*; *as though nothing men did more generally agree in, than in being fools*; yet as it is *evident* that the *ground* of that *scoff* was from the several *manners* of *Divination* then in *use*, so it cannot be *thought* to be a general *impeachment* of humane *nature* in a *thing* so *consequent* upon the *being* of a *God*, which as himself elsewhere proves, is as clear from *reason* as from that *Testimonium gentium in hac una re non dissidentium*, as the Christian *Cicero*, *Lactantius* speaks, *the consent of Nations, which scarce agree in any thing else, but that there is a God.* That which we now *inferr* from hence is, That *God* may make *known* his *mind* in a way *infallible*, though not *immediate*; for in case of *Inspiration* of mere *men*, it is not they so much which speak, as *God* by them; and in case that *God* himself should *speak* through the *veil* of *humane nature*, the *Testimony* must needs be *infallible*, though the *appearance* of the *Divinity* be not *visible*. *De falsa relig. cap.* 2.

Those evidences whereby a Divine Testimony may be known, must be such as may not leave mens minds in suspense, but are of their own nature convincing proofs of it. For although as to the *event* some may *doubt*, and others *disbelieve* the *Testimony* so *proved*, yet it is *sufficient* for our *purpose*, that in the *nature* of the *things* (supposing them to be such as we speak of) they are *sufficient* for the *eviction* that the *testimony* attested by them is *divine* and *infallible*. I know it is a great *dispute* among many, whether those *things* which are usually called the *common motives* of *faith*, do of their own *nature* only induce a *probable perswasion* of the *truth* of the *doctrine* as *probable* which they are *joyned* with, or else are they *sufficient* for the *producing* a firm *assent* to the *doctrine* as *True*? I grant they are not *demonstrative* so as to inforce *assent*; for we see the *contrary* by the *experience* of all ages; but that they are not *sufficient foundation* for an *unprejudiced* mind to *establish* a firm *Sect.* 10. *Hyp.* 4.

a firm *assent upon*, is a thing not *easie* to be *granted*; chiefly upon this account, that an *obligation* to *believe* doth *lie* upon every one to whom these *evidences* of a *Divine Testimony* are *sufficiently* discovered. And otherwise of all *sins* the sin of *unbelief* as to *God revealing his mind*, were the most *excusable* and *pardonable sin*; nay, it would be little less than a *part* of *prudence*; because what can it be *accounted* but *temerity* and *imprudence* in any to *believe* a *doctrine* as *true* only upon *probable inducements*? and what can it be but *wisdom* to *with-hold assent* upon a mere *verisimilitude*? considering what the *Lyrick Poet* hath long since truly told us.

Pindar. Od. 1.

χὴ τό τι χὴ βεβαῖον φρένα
ὔσσῃ τ' ἀλαθὴς λόγος
δεδαιδαλμένοι ψεύδεσι ποικίλοις
ὑπὲρ πατῶντι μῦθοι.

That a falshood may frequently seem truer to common understandings than truth its self: and as *Menander* speaks, τὸ πιθανὸν ἰσχὺν τ' ἀληθείας ἔχει ἐνίοτε μείζω, χὴ πιθανωτέραν ὄχλοι, *that a mere verisimilitude may have more force on vulgar minds than truth hath.* If therefore there be no *evidences* given *sufficient* to carry the *minds* of *men* beyond mere *probability*, what *sin* can it be in those to *disbelieve* who cannot be *obliged* to *believe* as *true* what is only *discovered* as *probable*: I cannot therefore see how an *obligation* to believe a *Divine Testimony* is *consistent* with their *opinion*, who make the *utmost* which any outward *evidences* can extend to, to be only the bare *credibility* of the *doctrine* attested by them. I can very well *satisfie* my self with the ground and reason why the more subtle *wits* of the *Church* of *Rome* do *assert* this; for if nothing *else* can be *produced* by all *motives* of *faith* but only a *probable perswasion* of the *truth* of *Christian doctrine*, then here comes in the *faireſt pretence* for the *Infallibility* of their *Church*; for otherwise they tell us we can have no *foundation* for a *Divine faith*; for how can that be a *foundation* for *Divine faith*, which can *reach* no higher than a *moral inducement*, and beget only a *probable perswasion* of the *credibility* of the *doctrine* of *Christ*? But on what account those who disown the *Infallibility* of the *Church* of *Rome* in the *proposal* of *matters* of *faith*, should yet *consent* with those of it in an *hypothesis* taken up in *probability*, merely out of *subserviency* to that most advantageous

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piece of the *mystery* of *iniquity*, is not easie to *resolve*. Unless the *over-fondness* of *some* upon the *doctrine* of the *Schools*, more than of the *Gospel*, hath been the *occasion* of it. For how agreeable can that *opinion* be to the *Gospel* which so evidently puts the most *defensive weapons* into the *hands* of *unbelief*? For doubtless in the *judgment* of any *rational person*, a mere *probable perswasion* of the *credibility* of the *doctrine* of *Christ*, where an *assent* to it as *true* is *required*, can never be looked on as an *act of faith*; for if my *assent* to the *truth* of the *thing* be according to the *strength* of the *arguments* inducing me to *believe*, and these *arguments* do only prove a *probability* of *Divine Testimony*, my *assent* can be no *stronger* than to a *thing* merely *probable*; which is, that it *may be*, or *not be true*; which is not properly *assent*, but a *suspending* our *judgments* till some *convincing argument* be *produced* on either side. And therefore according to this opinion those who saw all the *miracles* which *Christ* did, could not be *bound* to *believe* in *Christ*, but only to have a *favourable opinion* of his *person* and *doctrine*, as a *thing* which though not evidenced to be true by what he did, yet it was very *piously credible*; but they must have a *care* withal of *venturing* their *belief* too *far*, only on such *moral inducements* as *miracles* were, for fear they should go *further* than the *force* of the *arguments* would carry them. Had not this *opinion* now, think we, been a very *probable way* to have *converted* the *world* upon the *Preaching* of *Christ* and his *Apostles*; when *Christ* saith, *though ye believe* Joh. 10. 38.
not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him? Nay, saith this *opinion*, that is more than we are *bound* to *do*, though we see thy *works* we are not *bound* to *believe* thy *Testimony* to be *Divine* and certainly *true*; but we will do all we are *bound* to do; we will *entertain* a *favourable opinion* of thy *person* and *doctrine*, and *wait* for somewhat *else*, but we do not well *know* what, to perswade us to *believe*. When the *Apostles Preach* the *danger* of *unbelief*, Heb. 2. 3, 4.
because *the doctrine of the Gospel was confirmed by signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost*; what a fair *answer* doth this *opinion* put into the *mouths* of *Infidels*, that notwithstanding all these *signs* and *wonders*, they were never *bound* to *believe* the *Gospel* as a certain *Truth*, and therefore they hope the *danger* is not so *great* in *neglecting* the *salvation* promised by the *Gospel*.

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Sect. 11. I cannot conceive that men otherwiſe *learned* and *ſober*, ſhould with ſo much *confidence* aſſert that the *rational evidences of a Divine Teſtimony are inſufficient to prove a doctrine true*, unleſs it be from *hence*, that they *find* that notwithſtanding the *ſtrongeſt evidences* many *perſons continue* in *unbelief*. For ſay they, *if thoſe arguments were ſcientifical and demonſtrative*, (as they ſpeak) *of the truth of the doctrine atteſted by them, then all perſons to whom they are propounded, muſt certainly believe.* But this is very eaſily *anſwered*; for we ſpeak not of *internal*, but *outward evidence*; not of *that* in the *ſubject*, but of the *object*, or more fully of the *reaſon* of the *thing*, and not the *event* in *us*; for doubtleſs there may be *undoubted truth* and *evidence* in many *things* which ſome *perſons* either *cannot* or *will not* underſtand. If *Epicurus* ſhould *contend* ſtill that the *Sun* and *ſtars* are no *bigger* than they *ſeem* to be, will it hence *follow* that there can be no *rational demonſtration* of the *contrary?* Nay, if the *way* of *demonſtration* be *offered* him, and *Teleſcopes* put into his *hands*, yet if he be *reſolved* to *maintain* his *credit*, and therefore his *opinion*, and will not *uſe* the *Teleſcopes*, or *ſuſpect* ſtill they are *intended* only to *deceive* his *ſight*, what poſſible *way* will there be of *convincing* ſuch a *perſon*, though the thing be in its ſelf *demonſtrable?* Now if the *ſtrength* of *prejudice* or *maintaining* of *credit* can prevail ſo much in *matters* of *Mathematical evidence*, to *with-hold aſſent*, what *power* may we think a *corrupt intereſt* may have upon the *underſtanding*, as to the *arguments* which tend to prove the *truth* of that *doctrine*, which is ſo *repugnant* to that *carnal intereſt* which the *heart* is already devoted to! Our *Bleſſed Saviour* hath himſelf given us ſo full an *account* of the *original* and cauſes of *unbelief* in the *perſons* he converſed with, that that may *yield* us a ſufficient *anſwer* to this *objection*. He tells us the *ground* of it was not want of *light*, nay, there was *light* ſufficient to convince any, but that thoſe to whom the *light* came *loved darkneſs rather than it, becauſe their deeds were evil.* *That they could not believe while they received honour one of another, and ſought not the honour which was of God only*, i. e. That they were ſo *greedy* of *applauſe* from each *other*, that they would not *impartially ſearch* into the *truth* of that *doctrine*, which did touch their *ſores* ſo to the *quick*, that they had *rather* have them *feſter* upon them, than

Joh. 3. 19.

Joh. 5. 44.

than go to the *trouble* of so *sharp* a *cure*. That the *reason* so few followed him was because the *way* was *narrow* and the *gate strait which men must go in at*; and therefore no *wonder* so few of the *rich* and *proud Pharisees* could get in at it; they were partly so *swell'd* with a high *opinion* of *themselves*, and partly so *loaden* with their *riches*, that they thought it was to no *purpose* for them to *think* of *going* in at so *strait a gate*, while they were *resolved* to *part* with *neither*. Mat. 7. 14.

That the final *ground* of the *rejection* of any, was not *want* of *evidence* to bring them to *believe*, nor *want* of readiness in *Christ* to receive them if they did, but it was a *peevish, wilfull, obstinate, malicious spirit that they would not come to Christ*, nor *believe* his *Doctrine* (for those import the same) but when the most *convincing miracles* were used, they would rather *attribute them to the Prince of Devils, than to the power of God*. And though our *Saviour* presently by *rational* and *demonstrative arguments* did prove the *contrary* to their *faces*; yet we see thereby it was a *resolution* not to be *convinced*, or yield to the *Truth*, which was the cause why they did not *believe*. Now from this very *instance* of our *Saviour's* proceedings with the *Pharisees* by *rational arguments*, I demand, whether these *arguments* of our *Saviour* were sufficient *foundations* for a *divine assent* to that *truth that our Saviour did not his miracles by any Diabolical but by Divine power or no?* If they were, then it is *evident* that *rational evidence* may be a *foundation for Divine faith*, or that some *motives* to *believe* may be so *strong*, as to be sufficient *evidence* of the *truth* and *certainty* of the *Doctrine*: If these *arguments* were not sufficient *proofs* of what our *Saviour* spake, then welfare the *Pharisees*; it seems they said *nothing* but what might be thus far *justified*, that the *contrary* to it could not be *demonstrated*. And if the *evidence* of our *Saviour's miracles* were so *great*, as some suppose, that the *Pharisees* could not but be *convinced* that they were *divine*; but out of their *malice* and *envy* they uttered this *blasphemy* against the *Holy Ghost*, to keep the people from following *Christ*; then we hence inferr two things: *First, How strong an evidence there was in the miracles of Christ*, when it convinced his most resolute enemies that they were *divine*. *Secondly, What power a corrupt will may have over a convinced understanding*: For although the will may Joh. 5. 40. Matth. 11. 24.

not hinder *conviction*, yet it may ſoon *ſtifle* it, by ſuggeſting thoſe *things* to the *mind* which may divert it from thoſe *convictions* of *Truth*; and ſeek to find out *eaſy ways* to *diſgrace* it. It would be no difficult *taſk* to *diſcover* in all thoſe *inſtances* wherein the *unbelief* of men is *diſcovered* in the *New Teſtament*, that the *perſons* guilty of it did not proceed like *rational men*, or ſuch as deſired *Truth*, but were wholly *carried* away through *paſſion*, *intereſt*, *prejudice*, *diſaffection*, or ſome other *cauſe* of that *nature*, which may give us a ſufficient *account* why thoſe *perſons* did not *believe*, although there might be *clear* and *undoubted evidence* to *perſuade* them to it. But although I aſſert that theſe *rational evidences* are *ſufficient arguments* of the *truth* of the *doctrine* they come to *manifeſt*, yet I would not be ſo *underſtood*, that I thereby *reſolve* all *Religion* into a mere act of *reaſon* and *knowledge*, and that no more *power* is required in the *underſtanding* to *believe* the *Goſpel*, than to *believe* a *Mathematical demonſtration*: which is another *objection* ſome lay in the *way* of this *opinion*; but it is not *difficult getting* over it. For the *ſufficiency* which I *attribute* to *rational evidence*, is not *abſolute* and *ſimple*, but *in ſuo genere*, as an *objective evidence*. Notwithſtanding this, the whole *work* of the *Spirit* of *God* in its peculiar *energy* and way of *operation* upon the *ſoul*, is left *entire* to it ſelf: But then when the *ſpirit works* as to the *planting* of a truly *divine faith*, I do not think that it only *perſuades* the *ſoul* of the *Truth* of a *Divine Teſtimony*, but withall repreſents the *Truths revealed* by that *Teſtimony*, with all that *excellency* and *ſuitableneſs* that there is in them, that by the moſt *agreeable*, yet *effectual influence* of the *ſpirit* upon the *ſoul*, it cheerfully *embraceth* that *Truth* which is revealed, and *cordially* yields up its ſelf in *obedience* to it. This is the *Divine faith* which the *Scripture* acquaints us with, and not ſuch a *one* as merely *believes* the *truth* of a *Divine Teſtimony*; and as to the *production* of this *faith*, I acknowledge mere *rational evidence* to be *inſufficient*, becauſe they *proceed* in two very different *ways*; the one is to ſatisfie mens *minds* in the *truth* of the *doctrine*, the other is to *bring* them *effectually* to *adhere* unto it. The *aſſerting* of the one therefore doth no more *tend* to *deſtroy* the other, than the ſaying that a *Teleſcope* will help us to diſcover very much of the *heavenly bodies*, doth imply that a *blind man* may ſee *them*,

them, if he makes but *use* of them. Although therefore the *natural man* cannot *savingly apprehend* the *things of God*, yet there may be so much *rational evidence* going along with *Divine revelation*, that supposing *reason* to be *pure*, and not *corrupted* and *steeped* in *sence* as now it is, it would discover *spiritual evidence* to be the most *real* and *convincing evidence*. Thus far we have proved, *That where there is any infallible Temony, there is sufficient rational evidence going along with it, to make it appear that it is from God.*

CHAP. IX.

The rational evidence of the Truth of Christian Religion from Miracles.

The possibility of miracles appears from God and providence; the evidence of a Divine Testimony by them. God alone can really alter the course of nature. The Devil's power of working miracles considered. Of Simon Magus, Apollonius. *The cures in the Temple of* Æsculapius *at* Rome, *&c. God never works miracles, but for some particular end. The particular reasons of the miracles of Christ. The repealing the Law of* Moses, *which had been setled by miracles. Why Christ checked the Pharisees for demanding a sign, when himself appeals to his miracles. The power of Christ's miracles on many who did not throughly believe. Christ's miracles made it evident that he was the Messias, because the predictions were fulfilled in him. Why* John Baptist *wrought no miracles. Christ's miracles necessary for the overthrow of the Devil's Kingdom. Of the Demoniacks and Lunaticks in the Gospel, and in the Primitive Church. The power of the name of Christ over them largely proved by several Testimonies. The evidence thence of a Divine Power in Christ. Of counterfeit dispossessions. Of miracles wrought among Infidels. Of the future state of the Church. The necessity of the miracles of Christ, as to the propagation of Christian Religion: that proved from the condition of the publishers, and the success of the Doctrine. The Apostles knew the hazard of their employment; before*

they entred on it. The boldneſs and reſolution of the Apoſtles notwithſtanding this, compared with heathen Philoſophers. No motive could carry the Apoſtles through their imployment, but the truth of their Doctrine; not ſeeking the honour, profit or pleaſure of the world. The Apoſtles evidence of the truth of their Doctrine lay in being eye-witneſſes of our Saviour's miracles and reſurrection. That atteſted by themſelves; their ſufficiency thence for preaching the Goſpel. Of the nature of the doctrine of the Goſpel; contrariety of it to natural inclinations. Strange ſucceſs of it, notwithſtanding it came not with humane power: No Chriſtian Emperour, till the Goſpel univerſally preached. The weakneſs and ſimplicity of the inſtruments which preached the Goſpel. From all which the great evidence of the power of miracles is proved.

Sect. 1. *Hyp.* 5. OF *all rational evidences which tend to confirm the truth of a divine Teſtimony, there can be none greater than a power of working miracles for confirmation that the Teſtimony which is revealed is infallible.* The *poſſibility* of a *power* of *miracles* cannot be *queſtioned* by any who aſſert a *Deity* and a *Providence*; for by the ſame *power* that *things* were either at firſt *produced*, or are ſtill *conſerved* (which is *equivalent* to the other) the *courſe* of *nature* may be *altered*, and things *cauſed* which are beyond the *power* of inferiour *cauſes*: For though that be an immutable *Law* of *Nature* as to *Phyſical beings*, that every thing *remains* in the *courſe* and *order* wherein it was *ſet* at the *Creation*; yet that only *holds* till the ſame *power* which ſet it in that order ſhall otherwiſe *diſpoſe* of it; granting then the *poſſibility* of *miracles*, the ſubject of this *Hypotheſis* is, That a *power* of *miracles* is the cleareſt *evidence* of a *divine Teſtimony*, which will appear from theſe following *conſiderations*.

1. *God alone can really alter the courſe of nature.* I ſpeak not of ſuch things which are apt only to raiſe *admiration* in us becauſe of our *unacquaintedneſs* with the *cauſes* of them, or *manner* of their *production*, which are thence called *wonders*, much leſs of mere *juggles* and *impoſtures*, whereby the *eyes* of *men* are *deceived*; but I ſpeak of ſuch *things* as are in *themſelves* either *contrary to*, or above the *courſe* of *nature*, i.e. that *order* which is *eſtabliſhed* in the *univerſe*. The *Devil* no queſtion may, and doth often deceive the world, and may by the *ſubtilty*

subtilty and *agility* of his *nature*, perform such things as may amuse the *minds* of *men*, and sometimes put *them* to it, to find a *difference* between *them* and real miracles, if they only make their *senses* judges of them. And such *kind* of *wonders*, though they are but sparingly *done*, and with a kind of *secrecy* (as though they were consulting with *Cataline* about the *burning Rome*) yet the *Devil* would have *some* (especially when *Ignorance* and *Superstition* are *Ascendants*) to keep up his *interest* in the world. Or else, when he is like to be *dispossessed* and thrown out of all, he then tries his *utmost* to *keep* as many to him as may be; thus when the *Spirit* of *God* appeared in the *miracles* of our *Saviour* and his *Apostles* and the *Primitive Church*, he then conjured up all the infernal *Powers* to do something *parallel*, to keep possession of his *Idolatrous Temples*; as long as he could. Thus we find *Simon Magus dogging* the *Apostles* (as it were) at the *heels*, that by his *Magick* he might *stagger* the *faith* of *people* concerning the *miracles* wrought by the *Apostles*: after him *Apollonius* appeared upon the *Stage*; but his *wonders* are such pitifull *things*, compared with those wrought by *Christ* or his *Apostles*, that it could be *nothing* but *malice* in *Hierocles* to mention him in *competition* with *Christ*. But those *things* which seem a great deal more *considerable* than either of *these*, were, The *cure* of a *blind man* by *Vespasian* in *Ægypt*, mentioned by *Tacitus* and *Suetonius*, wherein there was a palpable *imitation* of our *Saviour's* curing the blind *man* in the *Gospel*; for the man told *Vespasian*, *restiturum oculos si inspuisset*, *that he should receive his sight by his spittle*; So *Spartianus* tells us of a *woman that was cured of her blindness by kissing the knees of the Emperour* Adrian; and *Boxhornius* hath produced an old *Table* in the *Temple* of *Æsculapius* at *Rome* of several diseased *persons* that were cured there: *A blind man in the time of* Antoninus *was cured by this Oracle*; *he must come to the Altar, and kneel there*; *from the right side he must turn to the left, and put five fingers upon the Altar, and then lift up his hands and touch his eyes, and so was cured: Another called* Lucius *cured of the pain of his side, by mixing the ashes of the Altar with the wine, and applying it to his side*; *another cured of spitting of bloud by the kernel of a pine-apple, and honey used three days*; *a fourth cured of blindness by the bloud of a white Cock and honey used three days*

Sueton. Vesp. cap. 7.

Quest. Rom. q. 7.

upon

upon his eyes. These are the most *considerable* of all the pretended *miracles* done about that *time*, when the *noise* of the *Christian miracles* were *spread* so far and done so *frequently*, that they *challenged* the *Heathens* again and again to *bring* forth any *person possessed* with a *Devil*, if he did not *confess* to them that he was a *Devil*, though he made the Heathens *believe* that he was a *God*, they were contented to leave their *blood* in the *place*.

Apol. c. 23. For thus *Tertullian* speaks in his *Apology* to them: *Edatur hic aliquis sub tribunalibus vestris, quem dæmone agi constet: jussus à quolibet Christiano loqui spiritus ille, tam se Dæmonem confitebitur de vero, quam alibi Deum de falso: æque producatur aliquis ex iis qui de Deo pati existimantur, qui aris inhalantes numen de nidore concipiunt, qui ructando curantur, qui anhelando profantur. Ista ipsa Virgo cœlestis pluviarum pollicitatrix, iste ipse Æsculapius Medicinarum demonstrator, alias de mortuturus scordii & denatii & Asclepiadoti subministrator, nisi se Dæmones confessi fuerint, Christiano mentiri non audentes, ibidem illius Christiani procacissimi sanguinem fundite. Quid isto opere manifestius, quid hac probatione fidelius? simplicitas veritatis in medio est; virtus illi sua assistit, nihil suspicari licebit, magia aut aliqua fallacia fieri. Dictis non stetis, si oculi vestri & aures permiserint vobis.* In these very daring words, we see how the *Christians* appealed to their *senses*, even with the *hazard* of their own *lives*, that they would make even *Æsculapius* himself confess *what he was*, and by whose *power* all the *cures* were wrought upon the *dreamers* in his *Temples*. And for the *manner* of the *Devils cures*, the same Author explains it

Apol. c. 22. thus, *Lædunt primo, dehinc remedia præcipiunt ad miraculum nova, sive contraria, post quæ desinunt lædere & curasse creduntur.* *They first possess the bodies themselves* (as *Demoniacks* were common in those times) *and affect it with various distempers, afterwards upon using the strange remedies prescribed by Æsculapius, they forsake their station, and the person is cured.* And for the cures performed by the *Emperours*, those who consider what various *artifices* were about that time *used* to procure an *opinion* of *Divinity* in the *Emperours*, will not much *wonder* that such *reports* should be *spread* of them, or that any *persons* should *feign* these *distempers* to give themselves out to be *cured* by *them*. But granting somewhat wonderfull in *these*, what are they,

they, *compared* with those *done* by *Christians*? and who ever would lay down his *life* to *attest* any of them? So that though the Devil by his *subtilty* may easily *impose* upon *Spectators* eyes, yet it was *impossible* for him by any *power* of his own to alter the *course* of *nature*, or *produce* any *real miracle*. For every true *miracle* is a *production* of *something* out of *nothing* (which cannot be done by less than an *omnipotent* arm) and that either in the *thing* it *self*, or the *manner* of *producing* it. In the *thing* it *self*, when it is of that *nature* that it cannot be *produced* by any *second causes*, as the *raising* of the *dead*; in the *manner* of *doing* it, when though the *thing* lies within the *possibility* of second *causes*, yet it is *performed* without the *help* of *any* of *them*, as in the *cure* of *diseases* without any *use* of *means*, *by a word speaking*, *the touch of a garment*, &c. Now that all those *miracles* which were wrought in *confirmation* of the *Christian doctrine* were such *true* and *proper miracles*, will be discovered afterwards.

God never alters the course of nature, but for some very considerable end. For otherwise when he did it, it would not be taken notice of, nor thought to be an *alteration* of the *order* of *nature*, but only some *rare contingencies* which lie hid in the *order* of *causes*, but only *break* out at some *times*: of which sort are all those *things* which the *ignorant world* is apt to account as *Prodigies*. Of all which *rare contingencies* in *nature*, I say, as the *Roman Orator* doth, *Si quod raro fit, id portentum putandum est, sapientem esse portentum est, sæpius enim mulum peperisse arbitror, quam sapientem fuisse. If all rare contingencies be accounted prodigies, a Wise man is certainly the greatest Prodigy.* But these are quite of another *nature* from true *miracles*, which are immediately produced by a *divine Power*, and intended for a *confirmation* of some *divine Testimony*. There are now several weighty *reasons* which might make *miracles* necessary in the time of our *Saviour*, as an *evidence* of his *Divine Authority* and *Power*. *Sect.* 2. 2. *Cicero de Div. l.* 2.

That he came to take down that way of worship which had been at first setled by a power of miracles in Moses. God would not be so much *wanting* to the *faith* of that *people* which had received their *Law* by *signs* and *wonders* from *Heaven*, but that there should be as *strong* an *evidence* given to them, that the *fulness* of *time* was *come* when that *dispensation* was to 1.

have

have an *end*, and to give *place* to one more perfect, which was to be *eſtabliſhed* inſtead of it. Upon which *account* the *Jews* might *rationally enquire* after a *ſign* where any *new revelation* was diſcovered, which might null the *obligation* of any former *Law*. and when they enquire ſo much after a *ſign*, our *Saviour* doth not reject the *enquiry* as in it ſelf *unreaſonable*, but as made in an *unreaſonable* manner; for they would not be *contented* with the *miracles* which *our Saviour wrought*, which ſufficiently *manifeſted* a *Divine power*; but all that they deſired was, *a ſign from heaven*, i. e. ſuch as were *done* at the
Matth. 12. 38. *giving* of the *Law*, the *thundring* and *lightnings* there; or,
16. 1. as the *raining of Manna in the Wilderneſs*; now our *Saviour* juſtly *checks* this *demand* as *importune* and *impudent*; partly as *knowing upon* what *account* they asked it, *merely* to *tempt* him; and not out of any *real deſire* of *ſatisfaction*; and partly becauſe of that *abundant evidence* which was *given* in the *miraculous cures* which were *wrought* by *him*, which were more *ſuitable* to that *deſign* of doing *good* in the *world*, than all the *Thunderclaps* on *Mount Sinai* were; neither were the *people* in a *condition* to be fed by *Manna* as they were in the *wilderneſs*, *God* graciouſly ſuiting the *diſcoveries* of his *power* to the peculiar *advantages* of the *people* which they were *made* to, and the *diſpenſation* they uſhered in. Thoſe terrible *ſigns* at Mount *Sinai* being very *ſuitable* to the *ſeverity* and *rigour* of the *Law*: and the gracious *miracles* of our *Saviour*, to the *ſweetneſs* and *grace* of the *Goſpel*. And on this account our *Saviour* charged the *Jews* with *hypocriſie*, in requiring a σημεῖον, as *ſomething* above δύναμις, a *prodigy* rather than a *mi-*
Matth. 12. 39. *racle*; *An evil and adulterous generation ſeeketh after a ſign, and there ſhall no ſign be given it but that of the Prophet* Jonas, *i. e.* this *people* which are ſo far from the *faith* of *Abraham*, (and therefore are *ſuppoſititious Children*) that no *miracles* which I doe, will *convince* them, but they ſeek only to have their *humours gratified* more than their *faith confirmed* by ſome *prodigy* from *Heaven*, ſhall not by me be thus *gratified*; but having *done* enough *already* to *perſuade* them, if they had any *heart* to *believe*, inſtead of a *ſign* from *Heaven*, they ſhall have only one from the *Earth*, and that not ſo much *intended* for the *converſion* of ſuch *wilfull Unbelievers*, as for the *teſtifying* my *Innocency* to the *world*, viz. *his reſurrection from*

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the dead. And so elsewhere when the *Jews* demand a *sign*, it was upon the doing of *that*, which if they had *attended* to, had been a sufficient *sign* to them, viz. *his driving the buyers and sellers out of the Temple:* Which being a *thing permitted* by the *Sanhedrin* and the *Priests*, how could they think so mean a *person*, in *appearance*, as our *Saviour* was, could ever have *effected* it, had it not been for a *Divine Majesty* and *Power* which appeared in him? It was not then the *expectation* of *miracles* which our *Saviour rebuked* in the *Jews*, but being *unsatisfied* with the *kind* and *nature* of our *Saviour's miracles.* It was their *hypocrisie* and *unbelief* which *Christ* condemned, notwithstanding the *frequent miracles* which he *wrought* among them: For we plainly find our *Saviour* very often *appealing* to his *miracles* as the *evidences* of his *Divine Commission: If I had not done the works among them, which no man else did, they had not had sin*, i. e. in not *believing* me. Whereby *Christ* both sets forth the *necessity* of his *working miracles* in order to the *conviction* of the *world*, and the *greatness* of the *miracles* which he *wrought*; he did those no *man else* had *done*, no not *Moses* and *Elias*, in curing all manner of *diseases* by the *word* of his *mouth*; and those *miracles* which they had done, he *exceeded* them in the *manner* of *doing* them. *Moses* fed them with *bread* from *Heaven*, but *Christ* multiplied on *earth* some *few loaves* and *fishes*, to the *feeding* of *many thousands: Elias* indeed raised *one* from the *dead*; but *Christ* raised *more*, and *one* after *he* had been *four days* in the *grave.* And upon this very *evidence* of our *Saviour's miracles* we find many *believing* on him. And even of *those* who were not so far wrought upon as to become *followers* of *Christ*, as the only *Messias*, yet we find them so far perswaded by the *power* of his *miracles*, that they looked upon him as a *great Prophet*, or one that was *sent* from *God*: So *Nicodemus*, who came *first* to *Christ* more as a *rational enquirer* than a *believer*, yet we see he was *perswaded that he was a teacher come from God, because no man could do the miracles which Christ did, unless God were with him.* And before him many of the *Jews* at *Jerusalem believed in his name when they saw the miracles which he did*; yet these persons *Christ would not trust himself with, because he knew their hearts were not subdued* to his *doctrine*, though their *understandings* were *convinced* by

Joh. 2. 18.

Joh. 5. 36. 10. 25.

Joh. 15. 24.

Joh. 1. 49. 2. 11.

Joh. 3. 2.

Joh. 2. 23.

his *miracles*. And after this others of the *Jews* that looked not on him as the *Messias*, yet it is said they *believed on him on the account of his miracles*. *And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?* Although herein they were most *unreasonable* in believing the *evidence*, and not the *truth attested* by it, in believing *Christ* to be one sent from *God* by his *miracles*, and yet not *believing* him to be the *Messias*, which was the *thing attested* by them. Not that *mere miracles* would prove the *person* to be the *Messias* who did them, but the *miracles* proved the *testimony* to be *Divine*; now that which *Christ* delivered to them as a *Divine Testimony*, was his *being* the *Messias*, and therefore by the same *reason* they *believed* him to be one *sent* from *God*, they ought to have *believed* him to be the *Messias*; for one sent from *God* could never *falsifie* in the *main* of his *message*, as this was of our *Saviour's* preaching. And hence it is *observable* our *Saviour* did not shew forth his *Divine power* till he *entred* upon his *office* of *preaching*, thereby making it *appear* he *intended* this as the *great evidence* of the *truth* of the *doctrine* which he *preached* to them. And herein the *blind man* in the *Gospel* saw more *truth* and *reason* than the *whole Court* of *Sanhedrin*, before which in *probability* he was *convented* about his *cure* by *Christ*; for when they sought to get something out of him in disparagement of our *Saviour's person* and *miracle*, he sharply and roundly tells them, when they said they knew *God* spake to *Moses*, *but for this fellow, we know not from whence he is. Why herein*, saith he, *is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing*; (as though he had said) is it not plain that this *man* is imployed by *God* in the world by the *miracles* which he doth? for otherwise *God* would not so readily *assist* him in doing such great works; *for we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth*; i. e. if this man pretended a *Commission* from *Heaven* falsly (whereby he would be the *greatest* of sinners) can we think *God* would so *miraculously* assist him? but we know by our *Law*, if one comes with a *Commission* from *God*, and *draw* men not to

Joh. 7. 31.

Joh. 9. 29, 30. ver. 33.

Ver. 31.

Idolatry,

Idolatry, which is meant by a *worshipper of God*, such a one *God* is present with, and we are bound to *believe* him. And for this very miracle, or curing one born blind, was the like ever heard of before? did ever *Moses* or the *Prophets* do it? Thus we see what strong rational evidence there was in this *miracle* of *Christ* in the *judgment* of this *blind man*, which he *uttered* with so much *reason* before the *Court* of *Sanhedrin*, when he knew how *like* he was to be *excommunicated* for it; and yet this very *person* was as yet *ignorant* that *Christ* was the *true Messias*, as appears by the *sequel* of the *Chapter*; Ver. 36. but upon *Christ's revelation* of himself to him, *he presently believed on him.* Ver. 38. How strangely *irrational* were the *Jews* then in *rejecting* our *Saviour* when his *miracles* not only *exceeded* those of *Moses* both in *number* and *quality*; but which was more, they saw *themselves* the *miracles* which *Christ* did, but they received those of *Moses* only upon the *credit* of their *Fathers!* And from the *strength* of the *evidence* arising from the *power* of *miracles* it is that St. *Peter* tells the *promiscuous Assembly*, Act. 2. 22. *That Jesus of* Nazareth *was a man approved of God among them, by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of them, as they themselves also knew.* He appeals to their own *knowledge*, which he would not certainly have *done*, had it not been in a case beyond all *dispute* among them. Which was a *thing* so *notorious* among them, that we find the *Pharisees* themselves confessing it, *What do we? For this man doth many miracles*: Joh. 11. 47. Now then in a *Nation* whose *religion* had been *established* by *miracles*, and the *certainty* of the *truth* of it, among those who then professed it, did *depend* so much upon the *constant credit* which the *report* of the *miracles* done at the *setling* of their *Law* had among them; what could be a more *rational convincing* way of *proceeding*, than for our *Saviour* to *manifest* by a greater *power of miracles* in *himself* the undoubted *credentials* of his *commission* from *Heaven*; and that he was the true *Messias*, which was *foretold* by their own most *sacred* and *authentical records*? Which will *appear* more,

Because the power of miracles did evidently declare that he was the very person promised. For if the exact *correspondency* of the *event* to the *predictions* in a Nation owning *Sect.* 3. 2.

them as *Divine*, be an undoubted *evidence* that they are exactly *fulfilled*, our *Saviour* was most certainly the person so often spoken of in the *Old Testament*. For many of the *Prophecies* of the *Old Testament* concerning the *Messias*, if they were not *fulfilled* in *Christ*, in the *conditions* the *Jews* have been in since their *dispersion*, (which fell out exactly according to the *prediction* of *Christ*) it is *impossible* they should be *fulfilled* at all. So that either the *predictions* must lose their *divine authority*, or they must be *accomplished* in our *blessed Saviour*. For as *Tertullian* sharply says to the *Jews*, *Redde statum Judææ quem Christus inveniat, & alium contende venire*; *Let the people of the Jews be in their former condition, and then plead for a Messias to come.* For can any *thing* be more *plain* than that the *Messias* was to be *born* in *Bethlehem* of *Judæa*? but where is that *now*, and how long since the *Jews* enjoyed any civil *Polity* there? what is become of the second *Temple*, in the *time* of which *the desire of all Nations should come*? Is not *Jerusalem* already *destroyed*, and the *oblation* there long *since ceased*, which was to *come* to *pass* so soon after the *Messias*, and *did* accordingly? Is not *the Scepter yet departed from* Judah, and *the Lawgiver from between his feet*, and is not *Shiloh* yet come? What strange unintelligible *weeks* were those of *Daniel*, if they were *extended* to so *indefinite* a *space* of *time* as the *Jews* pretend? and if *indefinite*, what certain *ground* could from thence be gathered of any *time* wherein their *accomplishment* was to be *expected*? but not to *expatiate* on those things which are already so largely *proved* beyond all *possibility* of *contradiction*, by the *ancient* and *modern learned Writers* against the *Jews*: To insist therefore on our present *business*; are not the *Prophecies* concerning the *miracles* which the *Messias* should *work*, exactly fulfilled in *Christ*? *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an Hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.* He must be a great *stranger* in the *History* of the *New Testament* that is to seek for an exact *fulfilling* of this *Prophecy*. Nay, and the *Jewish Midrasch*, upon *Psal.* 146. 8. saith, that when *Messias comes, he should open the eyes of the blind*; and the *Jews* themselves often *speak* of the great *miracles* which the *Messias* should doe when he appears; and therefore out of their own *mouths* will they be

C. Judæos, c. 13.

Isa. 35. 5, 6.

V. Grot. in Joh. 9. 32.

be *condemned*, when the *miracles* of *Christ* make it so *evident* that he was the true *Messias*. Hence when *John Baptist* sent his Disciples to *Christ* for them to be fully satisfied concerning him, Christ gives this answer to them; he bids them tell him, *the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, and the Lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up*, &c. Matth. 11. 5. as though the *mentioning* of these *miracles* was sufficient to make it *appear* to them *who* he was whom they came to enquire after. And therefore it is observable that *John Baptist* himself, though *greater* than the *Prophets*, nay, *than whom there was not a greater born of women*, by our *Saviour*'s own *Testimony*; yet of him it is said, *that he wrought no miracle:* Mat. 11. 9, 11. Joh. 10. 41. which no account can be given so *probable* and *rational*, as that *God* in his *infinite wisdom* was *pleased* so to *order* it, that the *evidence* of our *Saviour*'s being the *Messias* might be made more *clear* by the *miracles* which he *wrought*; that the *minds* of *people* might not be *distracted* between *John* and *Christ*; he therefore *reserved* the glory of *miracles* wholly to the *name* of *Christ*, that there might be no *pretence* of *competition* between *John* and *him*.

Another reason of the necessity of miracles in our Saviour by way of rational evidence, is, *the overthrowing the power and kingdom of the Devil in the world*. For which purpose it is observable that the *Devil* had scarce ever greater *power* over the *bodies* of *men* as well as their *souls*, than at that *time*; thence we read of such a *multitude* of *demoniacks* in the *Gospel*. For it seems very harsh to interpret those merely of *Epileptical* and *Lunatick* persons, both because the δαιμονιζόμενοι, and σεληνιαζόμενος, and φρενιτικοὶ, are mentioned *distinctly*, and that it appears by the *primitive Church* afterwards how *frequent* it was to eject the *Devil* out of *possessed persons*. Nay, so far am I from thinking that the *Demoniacks* were mere *Lunaticks*, that I rather think with *Vossius* that the *Lunaticks* were truly *Demoniacks*, only they were not constantly under the *power* of the *Devil*, but as their *paroxisms* returned upon them, the *Devil loving* to *fish* in such *troubled waters*. And thence the same person is called a *Lunatick* in one place, who is called a *Demoniack* in another; because he did *ruere in principiis lunationum*, as the *Arabick version* expresseth it; or as *Rusticus Elpidius* more fully explains it,

Sect. 4. 3.

Matth. 4. 24.

De Idol. l. 2. c. 19.

Mat. 17. 14. Luke 9. 39.

Reperat

Lib. 5.

Repſerat in medium rabies horrenda furoris
Dæmonis afflatu, propria qui peſte nocivus
Allidit captas fœdo diſcrimine mentes,
Menſtrua deciduos cum Luna recolligit ignes.

Theophylact is of opinion, that the *Jews* in the time of our *Saviour* ſuppoſed, that the *ſouls* of *dead men* became *Dæmons*, and thence we *read* in Scripture of the *Demoniacks* among the *Tombs*: but it is far more *probable* which *Grotius* conceives, that the *Jews* were of *opinion*, that the *ſouls* of *dead* men did *hover* up and *down* about their *bodies*, and that theſe were ſo long under the *Devils power*, which many of the *Jews* to this day *believe* and make uſe of the *inſtance* of the *Pythoniſs* raiſing *Samuel*; on which account the *Devils* to *favour* an opinion ſo *advantageous* to their *intereſt*, might appear with greater *terror* and *fury* about their *burying places*, as we ſee they did in thoſe *poſſeſſed perſons*. But on whatever *account* it was, we find it *evident* that about the *time* of our *Saviour's* appearance, and ſome time after, the truly ἐνεργούμενοι were very *frequent*; whether it were that the *Devil* by ſuch frequent *poſſeſſions* of *perſons*, and making them to do ſuch *ſtrange* things, might thereby *endeavour* to *invalidate* the *evidence* of our *Saviour's miracles* (from whence it is *probable* the *Phariſees* raiſed their *calumny*, that *Chriſt* did *miracles* by *Beelzebub*, becauſe they ſaw ſo many ſtrange *appearances* cauſed by *poſſeſſed perſons*) or whether it were through the *admirable providence* of *God*, which might give *Satan* the greater *liberty* at that *time*, on *purpoſe* to *heighten* the glory of our *Saviour* in *diſpoſſeſſing* of him, and thereby to give the *higheſt rational evidence*, that his *power* was of *God*, which tended ſo much to the *deſtruction* of the *Kingdom* of *Satan*.

Matt. 8. 28.

Sect. 5.

And hence the *Primitive Chriſtians* did ſo much *triumph*, and as it were *inſult* over the *Devil* where-ever they found him, making him to *remove* his *lodgings* from *poſſeſſed perſons*, by a *writ* of *ejection* from the *name* of Chriſt. Thence *Origen* rationally concludes that *Chriſt* had his *power* given him from *above*, becauſe at his very *name* the *Devils* forſook the bodies which they had *poſſeſſed*, Εἰ γὰρ μὴ ἀνώθεν ἦν αὐτῷ δεδομένη δύναμις, οὐκ ἂν ἔφη δαίμονας τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ ἀπαγγελλομένῳ μόνον εἴκοντας

Orig. c. Celſ. l. 3.

οἰκοῦσας ἀναχώρειν ἀπὸ τῆς ἰδίας αὐτῶν πολεμιδίων. And he elsewhere tells us, that even the meanest sort of *Christians* without any *ceremony*, but merely by their *prayers*, did ordinarily eject the *Devil* out of mens *bodies*: ὡς ὀλίγοι μὲν ἰδιῶται τὸ πιστὸν ἐφέντων, παρισάσης δὲ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ χειρὸς κἀκεῖνοι τὸ τῆς δαιμόνων εὐτελὲς καὶ ἀδυνὲς, ὁ πίνλως δεδιότων πρὸς τὸ ὀνειδίσαι καὶ αἴσχος ὑπεξελθεῖν ἀπὸ Ψυχῆς ἀνθρώπου καὶ σώματος σοφοῦ πνος καὶ δυνατοῦ ἐν τῇ λογικαῖς περὶ τῆς πίστεως ἀποδείξεσι. *Ordinary Christians*, saith he, *most commonly do this, the Grace of Christ by its word thereby discovering the contemptibleness and infirmity of the Devils, that in order to their ejection they did not so much as want any learned or experienced Christian.* And for this they appeal to the *Heathens* themselves, as appears not only by the challenge of *Tertullian* already mentioned, but by the *Testimony* of almost all of *them* who have *writ* against the *Heathens* in *vindication* of the *Christian Religion*. Thence *Minutius Felix*, *Hæc omnia sciunt plerique, pars vestrum, ipsos dæmonas de semetipsis confiteri, quoties à nobis tormentis verborum, & orationis incendiis de corporibus exiguntur. Ipse Saturnus & Serapis, & Jupiter, & quicquid dæmonum colitis, victi dolore quod sunt eloquuntur, nec utique in turpitudinem sui nonnullis præsertim vestrum assistentibus, mentiuntur. Ipsis testibus eos esse Dæmonas, de se verum confitentibus credite; adjurati enim per Deum verum & solum, inviti, miseri corporibus inhorrescunt; & vel exiliunt statim, vel evanescunt gradatim, prout fides patientis adjuvat, aut gratia curantis aspirat.* Can we now think the *Devil* should not only *forsake* his *Tyranny* over the *bodies* of men, but let go so *advantageous* a *pillar* of his *tyranny* over the *consciences* of men in *Idolatrous worship*, as the *concealing* himself *was*, had he not been *forced* to it by a *power* far *greater* than his own? So *Cyprian ad Demetrianum*, appeals to him being the *Proconsul* of *Africa*, about the same thing (who had written *sharply* against the *Christians*) for speaking of the *Devils* whom they *worshipped* in their *Idols*. *O si audire eos velles & videre, quando à nobis adjurantur & torquentur Spiritualibus flagris & verborum tormentis de obsessis corporibus ejiciuntur, quando ejulantes & gementes voce humana, & potestate divina flagella & verbera sentientes, venturum judicium confitentur; veni & cognosce vera esse quæ dicimus*: and a little after, *videbis sub manu nostra*

Lib. 7.

P. 31. *ed.* Ouz.

Ad Demetr. f. 12.

noſtra ſtare vinctos, & tremere captivos, quos tu ſuſpicis & veneraris ut Dominos. Did ever any of the *Heathen Magicians* (of which there were good ſtore) *extort* ſuch things from the *Devils*, as the *Chriſtians* did, merely by their *prayers*, and *invocations* of the name of *God* and *Chriſt*? did they ever make them confeſs to be what they were, not only in poſſeſſed *bodies* but in their *Temples* too? that was beyond the *power* of their *Epheſian letters*, or any of their *Magical incantations*. Did the *Devils* ever dread ſo much the *name* of *Socrates* or *Ariſtides* as they did that of *God* and of *Chriſt*? Of which

De juſtitia. lib. 5. c. 21. *Lactantius* thus ſpeaks, *Quo audito tremunt, exclamant, & uri ſe verberarique teſtantur, & interrogati qui ſint, quando venerint, quando in hominem irrepſerint, confitentur ſic extorti, & excruciati virtute divini numinis exulant; propter hæc verbera & minas, ſanctos & juſtos viros ſemper oderunt.* And even *Apollo* himſelf at the *name* of *Chriſt* trembled as much as ever the *Pythian Prophcteſs* did in her greateſt *furies*; ſo *Prudentius* tells us.

Torquetur Apollo
Nomine percuſſus Chriſti, nec fulmina verbi
Ferre poteſt; agitant miſerum tot verbera lingnæ,
Quot laudata Dei reſonant miracula Chriſti.

Apotheoſ.

To theſe we may add what *Firmicus* ſaith to the ſame purpoſe, *Ecce Dæmon eſt quem colis; cum Dei & Chriſti ejus nomen audierit, contremiſcit, & ut interrogantibus nobis reſpondeat trepidantia verba, vix ſe colligit; adhærens homini lacerat, uritur, vapulat, & ſtatim de commiſſis ſceleribus confitetur.* By which Teſtimonies it appears what *power* over Satan, when he was in his *Kingdom*, the *Chriſtians* by the *power* of *Chriſt* had; not as though the bare *name* of *Chriſt* had ſo

De errore prof. relig.

L. 1. c. Celſ. *great* an *efficacy* in the *ejection* of *Devils*, as *Origen* ſeems to be of *opinion* (in a *diſcourſe* about the *efficacy* of *names*, unworthy of ſo great a *Philoſopher*) but that *God* might manifeſt to the world the *truth* that was *contained* in that *name*, he did give a *power* to ſuch as made *uſe* of it, of *working miracles* by it. And thence we read in *Scripture*, that ſome who were not throughly *Chriſtians*, but yet profeſſed the *truth* of the *Goſpel*, and that what they did was for the *honour* of *Chriſt*, *had a power of caſting out Devils and doing many wonderful things through his name.*

Matt. 7. 22.

By

Sect. 6.

By these and many other testimonies which might be produced out of the Primitive *Church*, we find an exact *accomplishment* of our *Saviour*'s promise to his *Disciples* when he took his leave of them: *And these signs shall follow them that believe, In my name shall they cast out Devils*, &c. This *power* then in the Primitive *Church* had a *twofold argument* in it, both as it was a *manifestation* of the *truth* of the *predictions* of our *Saviour*, and as it was an *evidence* of the *Divine power* of *Christ*, when his *name* so long after his *ascension* had so great a *command* over all the *infernal spirits*; and that so *evidently*, that at that *time* when the *Christians* did as it were *Tyrannize* over *Satan* so in his own *territories*, yet then the *greatest* of his *Magicians* had no *power* to hurt the *bodies* of the *Christians*, which is a thing *Origen* takes much notice of. For when *Celsus* saith from *Diogenes Ægyptius* that *Magick* could *only hurt ignorant and wicked men, and had no power over Philosophers*; *Origen* replies, *first*, that *Philosophy* was no such *charm* against the *power* of *Magick*, as appears by *Mæragenes* who writ the *story* of *Apollonius Tyaneus*, the famous *Magician* and *Philosopher*, who therein mentions how *Euphrates* and an *Epicurean* (οὐκ ἀγνῶτες φιλόσοφοι, *no vulgar Philosophers*) were *catched by the Magick of Apollonius*, (and although *Philostratus* disown this *History* of *Mæragenes* as *fabulous*, yet he that thinks *Philostratus* for that, to be of any greater *credit*, is much *deceived*, of whom *Lud. Vives* gives this true *character*, that he doth *magna Homeri mendacia majoribus mendaciis corrigere, mend one hole and make three*,) but, saith *Origen*, as to the *Christians*, this is undoubtedly true: Διαβεβαίωμεθα ἢ ἡμεῖς καὶ τῇ πίστει ἐφαλωκότες, ὅτι οἱ κατ' ἐπίκλησιν μὲν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τῷ τὸν πάσῃ δημιουργίᾳ ὑποτετάχθαι θεὸν, καὶ ζῶντες κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον αὐτοῦ καὶ προσευχαῖς ἢ εὐχαῖς συνεχέσιν καὶ νύκτωρ νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας χρώμενοι, ὅτε μαλιστα ὅτι δαιμονίοις εἰσὶν ἀλωτοὶ. *This*, saith he, *we are most certain of, and have found it by experience true, that those who according to the principles of Christianity do worship God over all, through Jesus, and do live according to the Gospel, being constant in their solemn prayers night and day, are not obnoxious to the power of any Magick or Devils whatsoever.* Now then if the *Devil* who had then so much power over others, had none upon the true followers of *Christ*; and if instead of that they had so great a *commanding power* over the *Devil* even in things

Mark 16. 17.

De trad. disc. l. 5.

Cont. Celf. l. 6. p. 302.

which tended moſt to his *diſadvantage*, not only *diſlodging* him out of *bodies*, but out of his *Idolatrous Temples*; what can be more *evident*, than that this *power* which was ſo *efficacious* for the overthrowing the *Kingdom* of *Satan*, muſt needs be far greater than the *power* of *Satan* is? For it is an undoubted *Maxim* in natural *reaſon*, That *what-ever is put out of its former place by force and violence, is extruded by ſomething ſtronger than its ſelf*; for if the *force* on either ſide were *equal*, there could be no *diſpoſſeſſing* of *either*; if any thing then be caſt out of its former *poſſeſſion unwillingly*, it is an *undeniable* proof there was ſome *power* greater than *his* who was *diſpoſſeſſed*. Now we cannot conceive, if there be ſuch *malignant ſpirits*, as by many undeniable proofs it is evident there are, that they ſhould willingly *quit* their *poſſeſſions* to ſuch a *doctrine* which tends to the *unavoidable ruine* of their *intereſt* in the world; if then the *power* of this *doctrine* hath *overthrown* the *Devil's Kingdom* in the world, where-ever it hath been truly *entertained*, it muſt neceſſarily follow, that this *power* is far *above* the *power* of any *damned ſpirits*. Now what *folly* and *madneſs* was it in the *Heathens* to worſhip thoſe for *Gods*, which they could not but ſee, if they would open their eyes, were under ſo great *ſlavery* to a *power* above them, which could make *them* confeſs what was moſt to their *diſadvantage* in the *preſence* of their great *adorers*?

Sect. 7. Neither ought the many *counterfeits* and *impoſtures* which have been in the *world* in this *kind* ſince the *eſtabliſhment* of *Chriſtian Religion* (among the *advancers* of particular *intereſts* and *deſigns*) make us *ſuſpect* the *truth* of thoſe things which were done in the firſt *Ages* of the *Church* of *Chriſt*. For, firſt, it *ſtands* to the *greateſt reaſon*, that the ſtrongeſt *arguments* for the *truth* of a *Religion* ought to be *fetched* from the *ages* of its firſt *appearance* in the *world*; if then the *evidence* be *undoubted* as to thoſe *firſt times*, we ought to *embrace* our *Religion* as *true*, what-ever the *impoſtures* have *been* among *thoſe* who have apparently *gone aſide* from that *purity* and *ſimplicity* of the *Goſpel*, which had ſo great *power*. Then, ſecondly, if all that hath been done in this kind of *ejecting Devils*, where *Chriſtianity* is owned, be acknowledged for *impoſtures*: one of theſe *two things* muſt be ſuppoſed as the *ground* of it: either that there was no ſuch *thing* as a *real poſſeſſion by the Devil*,

vil, or else there was no such thing as a *dispossessing him*; If the *first*, then hereby will be seen a *confirmation* of our *former argument*, that where *Christianity* is owned, by the *power* of that, the *Devil* is more *curbed* and *restrained*, than where it is not, or else is much *over-run* with *ignorance* and *superstition*. Of the *latter*, the *ages* of the *Christian Church*, from the *10th Century* to the beginning of the *16th Current*, are a *clear evidence*; Of the *first*, all those who have been *conversant* in the places where *Paganism* or *gross Idolatry* do yet reign, will bring in their *creditable testimonies*, how *tyrannical* the *power* of the *Devil* is yet among them. If it be not so then, where carefull *endeavours* have been used for *retrieving* the *ancient purity* of *Christian doctrine* and *worship*, we ought to *impute* it to the *power* of *him* who is *stronger* than *Satan*, who where-ever he comes to *dwell*, doth *dispossess* him of his former *habitations*. If the *second* then be *entertained* as the *ground* of *concluding* all things as *impostures*, which are accounted *dispossessions* of *Satan*, viz. *that he never is really dispossessed*; then it must either be said, that where he is once *seized*, there is no *possibility* of *ejecting* him; which is to say, that the *Devil* hath an *absolute and infinite power*, and that there is no *power greater* than his, which is to own him for *God*; or else that *God* suffers him to *tyrannize* where and how he will, which is contrary to *Divine providence*, and the *care God* takes of the *world*, and of the *good* of *mankind*; or else, *lastly*, that those *persons* who *pretend* to do it, are not such *persons* who are *armed* so much with the *power* of *Christ*, nor *possessed* with such a due *spirit* of the *Gospel*, which hath *command* over these infernal *spirits*. And this in the *cases* pretended by the great *Juglers* and *Impostures* of the *Christian world*, the *Popish Priests* have been so *notorious*, that none of their own *party* of any great *faith* or *credit* would stand to *vouch* them. And we have this *impregnable argument* against all such *Impostures*, that the *matters* which they by such *actions* would give an *evidence* to, being so *vastly different* from, if not in some things *diametrically* opposite to the first *delivery* and *design* of the *Christian faith*, it is *inconsistent* with the *way* used for the *confirmation* of *Christian Religion* in the *first publishing* of it, to attest the *truth* of such *things* by any *real miracles*: For so it would *invalidate* the great *force* of the *evidences* of the *truth* of *Christianity*, if

the ſame *argument* ſhould be uſed for the *proving* of that which in the *judgment* of any impartial *perſon* was not *delivered*, when the *truth* of the *doctrine* of *Chriſt* was *confirmed* by ſo many and *uncontrouled miracles*. But hereby we ſee what *unconceivable prejudice* hath been done to the *true primitive doctrine* of the *Goſpel*; and what *ſtumbling-blocks* have been laid in the way of *conſiderative perſons*, to keep them from embracing the truly *Chriſtian faith*, by *thoſe* who would be thought the *infallible directors* of men in *it*, by making *uſe* of the *broad-ſeal* of *Heaven* (ſet only to the *truth* of the *Scriptures*) to *confirm* their *unwritten* and *ſuperſtitious ways* of *worſhip*. For if I once ſee that which I looked on as an *undoubted evidence* of *Divine power*, brought to *atteſt* any *thing* directly *contrary* to *Divine revelation*; I muſt either *conclude* that *God* may *contradict* himſelf by *ſealing* both *parts* of a *contradiction*, which is both *blaſphemous* and *impoſſible*; or that that *ſociety* of *men* which own ſuch *things*, is not at all *tender* of the *honour* of *Chriſtian doctrine*, but ſeeks to ſet up an *intereſt* contrary to *it*, and *matters* not what *diſadvantage* is done to the *grounds* of *Religion* by ſuch *unworthy pretences*; and which of theſe two is more *rational* and *true*, let every one's *conſcience* judge. And therefore it is much the *intereſt* of the *Chriſtian* World to have all ſuch *frauds* and *impoſtures* diſcovered, which do ſo much *diſſervice* to the *Chriſtian Faith*, and are ſuch *ſecret fomenters* of *Atheiſm* and *Infidelity*. But how far that *promiſe* of our *Saviour*, *That they which believe in his name, ſhall caſt out Devils, and do many miracles*, may extend even in theſe *laſt ages* of the *world* to ſuch *generous* and *primitive-ſpirited Chriſtians*, who out of a *great* and *deep ſenſe* of the *truth* of *Chriſtianity* and *tenderneſs* to the *ſouls* of *men*, ſhould go among *Heathens* and *Infidels* to *convert* them only to *Chriſt* (and not to a ſecular *intereſt*, under pretence of an *infallible head*) is not here a *place* fully to *enquire*. I confeſs I cannot ſee any *reaſon* why *God* may not yet for the *conviction* of *Infidels*, employ ſuch a *power* of *miracles*, although there be not ſuch *neceſſity* of it, as there was in the firſt *propagation* of the *Goſpel*, there being ſome *evidences* of the *power* of *Chriſtianity* now, which were not ſo clear then, (as the *over-throwing the Kingdom of Satan in the world*; *the prevailing of Chriſtianity, notwithſtanding force uſed againſt it*; *the recovery of it from amidſt*

Mat. 16. 17.

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all the corruptions which were mixed with it; the consent of those parties in the common foundations of Christianity, which yet disagree from each other with great bitterness of spirit,) though I say it be not of that *necessity* now, when the *Scriptures* are *conveyed* to us in a *certain uninterrupted manner*; yet *God* may please out of his *abundant provision* for the *satisfaction* of the *minds* of *men*, concerning the *truth* of *Christian doctrine*, to employ *good men* to *do* something which may *manifest* the *power* of *Christ* to be above the *Devil's*, whom they *worship*. And therefore I should far sooner believe the *relation* of the *miracles* of *Xaverius* and his *Brethren*, employed in the *conversion* of *Infidels*, than *Lipsius* his *Virgo Hallensis* and *Asprecollis*, could it but be made *evident* to me that the *design* of those *persons* had more of *Christianity* than *Popery* in it; *that is*, that they went more upon a *design* to *bring* the *souls* of the *Infidels* to *Heaven*, than to *enlarge* the *authority* and *jurisdiction* of the *Roman Church*.

But what-ever the *truth* of those *miracles*, or the *design* of those *persons* were, we have *certain* and *undoubted evidence* of the *truth* of those *miracles*, whereby *Christianity* was first *propagated*, and the *Kingdom* of *Satan* over-thrown in the world; *Christ* thereby making it *appear* that his *power* was greater than the *Devil's*, *who had possession, because he over-came him, took from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divided his spoils*; i.e. *dispossessed* him of mens *bodies*, and his *Idolatrous Temples*, *silenced* his *Oracles*, *nonplust* his *Magicians*, and at last, when *Christianity* had overcome by *suffering*, *wrested* the *worldly Power* and *Empire* out of the *Devil's hands*, and *employed* it against *himself*. Neither may we think, *because since that time the Devil hath got some ground in the world again by the large spread of Mahometism, and the general corruptions in the Christian world, that therefore the other was no argument of Divine power*; because the *truth* of *Christianity* is not *tied* to any particular *places*; *because* such a *falling away* hath been *foretold* in the *Scripture*, and therefore the *truth* of *them* is proved by it, and because *God* himself hath *threatned* that those who will not receive the *truth* in the *love* of it, shall be *given up to strong delusions*. Doth not this then in *stead* of *abating* the *strength* of the *argument*, *confirm* it more, and that nothing is fallen out in the *Christian world*, but what was

Sect. 8.

Luk. 11. 21, 22.

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foretold by those whom *God* employed in the converting of it? But we are neither without some fair *hopes* even from that *Divine revelation* which was *sealed* by *uncontrouled evidence*, that there may be yet a *time* to *come* when *Christ* will recover his *Churches* to their *pristine purity* and *simplicity*; but withall, I think we are not to measure the *future felicity* of the *Church* by outward *splendor* and *greatness* (which too many so strongly fansie) but by a *recovery* of that true *spirit* of *Christianity* which *breathed* in the *first ages* of the *Church*, what-ever the outward *condition* of the *Church* may be: For if *worldly greatness*, and *ease*, and *riches*, were the first *impairers* of the *purity* of *Christian Religion*, it is hard to *conceive* how the *restoring* of the *Church* of *Christ* to its true *glory*, can be by the *advancing* of *that*, which gives so *great* an *occasion* to *pride* and *sensuality*, which are so contrary to the *design* of *Christian Religion*; unless we suppose men free from those *corruptions*, which continual *experience* still tells the *world* the *Rulers* as well as *Members* of the *Christian society* are *subject* to. Neither may that be *wondered* at, when such *unevenness* of *parts* is now discovered in the *great Luminaries* of the *world*, and the *Sun* himself is found to have his *maculæ*, *as though the Sun had a purple Fever*, or as *Kircher* expresseth it, *Ipse Phœbus, qui rerum omnium in universo naturæ Theatro aspectabilium longè pulcherrimus omnium opinione est habitus, hoc seculo tandem fumosa facie, ac infecto vultu maculis prodiit; diceres eum variolis laborare senescentem:* I speak not this as though an outward *flourishing condition* of the *Church* were *inconsistent* with its *purity*; for then the *way* to *refine* it, were to throw it into the *flames* of *persecution*; but that the *advancement* of the *flourishing condition* of the *Church*, is not merely by outward *pomp* and *grandeur*, and that the *purity* of the *Church* is not *inconsistent* with a state of *outward difficulties*, which the *experience* of the Primitive *Church* gives an *irrefragable demonstration* of. Thus much may serve to shew the *necessity* of a *power* of *miracles*, conjoyned with the *Christian doctrine*, to manifest the *truth* of it by overthrowing the *Kingdom* of *that* great *Antichrist* the *Devil*, who had usurped so much *Tyranny* over the World.

Propyl. Agonist. ad Oedipum, cap. 2.

The

Sect. 9.

The last *reason* why a power of *miracles* was so necessary for confirming the *truth* of the Gospel, is, *because the Gospel was to be propagated over the world without any other rational evidence than was contained in the miracles wrought for the confirmation* of it. Now the admirable *success* which this doctrine found in the world, considering all the *circumstances* of it, do make it clear what *certainty* there was that the *miracles* which were wrought were *true*, and they were *certain evidences* that the *doctrine* attested by them was from *God*. Now this will appear from these two things:

1. *That no rational account can be given why the Apostles should undertake to publish such a doctrine, unless they had been undoubtedly certain that the Doctrine was true, and they had sufficient evidence to persuade others to believe it.*

2. *That no satisfactory account can be given, considering the nature of the doctrine of Christ, and the manner of its propagation, why it should meet with so great acceptance in the world, had there not been such convincing evidence as might fully persuade men of the truth of it.*

1. I begin with the *first*, *from the publishers of this doctrine in the world.* All that I here require by way of a *Postulatum* or *supposition*, are only these two things, which no man *right* in his *wits* I suppose will *deny*: 1. *That men are so far rational agents, that they will not set upon any work of moment and difficulty, without sufficient grounds inducing them to it*; and by so much the *greater* the *work* is, the more *sure* and *stedfast* had the *grounds* need to be which they proceed upon. 2. *That the Apostles or first Publishers of the Christian Doctrine were not men distracted, or bereft of their wits, but acted by principles of common sense, reason and understanding, as other men in the world do:* Which if any one should be so far beside his *wits* as to *question*, if he have but *patience* and *understanding* enough to read and consider those admirable *writings* of theirs which are *conveyed* to us by as *certain uninterrupted* a *Tradition* as any thing in the *world* hath been, by that *time* he will see *cause* to alter his *judgment*, and to say that *they are not mad, but speak the words of the greatest truth and soberness.* These things supposed, I now proceed to the proving of the *thing* in hand, which will be done by these *three* things; First, *That the Apostles could not but know how hazardous an employment the preaching*

preaching of the Gospel would be to them. Secondly, *That no motive can be conceived sufficient for them to undertake such an employment, but the infallible truth of the doctrine which they preached.* Thirdly, *That the greatest assurance they had themselves of the truth of their Doctrine, was by being eye-witnesses of the miracles of Christ.*

First, *That the Apostles could not but understand the hazard of their employment, notwithstanding which they cheerfully undertook it.* That men *armed* with no *external power*, nor cried up for their *wit* and *learning*, and carrying a *doctrine* with *them* so contrary to the *general inclinations* of the *world*, having nothing in it to *recommend* it to *mankind* but the *truth* of it, should go about to persuade the *world* to *part* with the *Religion* they *owned*, and was setled by their *Laws*, and to *embrace* such a *Religion* as called them *off* from *all* the *things* they loved in this *world*, and to prepare *themselves* by *mortification* and *self-denial* for another world, is a thing to humane reason *incredible*, unless we *suppose* them acted by a *higher spirit* than *mankind* is ordinarily *acted* by. For what is there so *desirable* in *continual reproaches* and *contumelies?* what delight is there in *racks* and *prisons?* what *agreeableness* in *flames* and *martyrdoms* to make men *undergo* some, nay all of these rather than *disown* that *doctrine* which they came to *publish?* Yet these did the *Apostles* cheerfully *undergo* in order to the *conversion* of the *world* to the *truth* of that *doctrine* which they *delivered* to it. And not only so, but though they did *foresee* them, they were not *discouraged* from this *undertaking* by it. I confess, when men are upon *hopes* of *profit* and *interest* in the *world*, engaged upon a *design* which they promise themselves *impunity* in, having *power* on their side, though afterwards things should fall out *contrary* to their *expectation*, such *persons* may die in such a *cause*, because they *must*, and some may *carry* it out with more *resolution*, partly through an *innate fortitude* of *spirit*, heightned with the *advantages* of *Religion*, or an *Enthusiastick temper*. But it is hard to conceive that such *persons* would have *undertaken* so hazardous an *employment*, if before-hand they had *fore-seen* what they must have *under-gone* for it. But now the *Apostles* did *fore-know* that *bonds* and *imprisonment*, nay *death* it self must be undergone in a violent *manner*, for the sake of the *doctrine* which they

they *preached*; yet notwithstanding all this, they go *boldly* and with *resolution* on with their *work*, and give not *over* because of any *hardships* and *persecutions* they met withall. One of the chiefest of them, St. *Peter*, and as forward as any in *Preaching* the *Gospel*, had the very manner of his *death* foretold him by *Christ* himself, before his *Ascension*; yet soon after we find him preaching *Christ* in the *midst* of those who had *crucified* him, and telling them to their *faces* the *greatness* of their *sin* in it, and *appealing* to the *miracles* which *Christ* had done among them, and *bidding them repent and believe in him whom they had crucified, if ever they would be saved*: And this he did, not only among the *people* who gave their consent to the *crucifying* of *Christ*; but soon after, being *convented* together with *John*, before the *Court* of *Sanhedrin* (probably the very same which not long before had sentenced *Christ* to *death*) for a *miracle* wrought by *them*, with what *incredible boldness* doth he to their *faces* tell them of their *murdering Christ*; and withall, that there was no other way to salvation but by him whom they had crucified! *Be it known unto you all* (saith *Peter* to the *Sanhedrin*) *and to all the people of* Israel, *that by the name of Jesus Christ whom ye have crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.* What an *heroick freedom* of *spirit* appears in these words! what *magnanimity* and *courage* was there now in that *person*, who durst in the *face* of this *Court* tell them of their murther, and that there was no *salvation* but by *him* whom they had *crucified!* Well might they *wonder* at the *boldness* of the *men*, who feared not the same *death* which they had so lately brought their *Lord* and *Master* to.

Joh. 21. 19. Act. 2. 22, 23, 38. Act. 3. 14, 15, 16, 19. Act. 4. 5. Act. 4. 10, 12.

Sect. 10. Neither was this singly the *case* of *Peter* and *John*, but all the rest of the *Apostles* undertook their work with the same *resolution* and *preparation* of *Spirit* to undergo the greatest *hardship* in the world for the *sake* of the *truths* they *Preached*. And accordingly as far as *Ecclesiastical History* can ascertain us of it, they did all but *John* (and that to make good the *prediction* of *Christ*) suffer *violent deaths* by the *hands* of those who *persecuted* them merely for their *doctrine*. And which is

Joh. 21. 22.

most observable, when *Christ* designed them first of all for this work, he told them before-hand of *reproaches, persecutions, all manner of hardships*, nay of *death* it self, which they must *undergo* for his *sake*. All that he gave them by way of *encouragement*, was, that they could only *kill the body* and not the *soul*, and therefore *that they should fear him only who could destroy both body and soul in Hell*; all the *support* they had, was, an *expectation* in another *world*, and that *animated* them to go *through* all the *hardships* of *this*. Where do we ever *read* of any such *boldness* and *courage* in the most knowing *Philosophers* of the *Heathens?* with what *faintness* and *misgiving* of *mind* doth *Socrates* speak in his famous discourse supposed to be *made* by him before his *death?* how uncertainly doth he speak of a *state* of *immortality?* and yet in all *probability Plato* set it forth with all *advantages imaginable*. Where do we ever find that ever any of the great *friends* of *Socrates* who were present at his *death*, as *Phædo*, *Cebes*, *Crito* and *Simmias*, durst enter the *Areopagus*, and condemn them there for the *murther* of *Socrates*, though this would be far short of what the *Apostles* did? why were they not so *charitable* as to *inform* the *world* better of those grand *truths* of the *being* of *God* and *immortality* of *Souls*, if at least they were fully convinced of them themselves? Why did not *Plato* at least *speak* out, and tell the world the *truth*, and not *disguise* his *discourses* under feigned *names*, the better to avoid *accusation* and the *fate* of *Socrates?* how doth he mince his *excellent matter*, and *plays* as it were at *Bo-peep* with his *Readers*, sometimes *appearing*, and then *pulling* in his *horns* again? It may not be an improbable *conjecture* that the *death* of *Socrates* was the *foundation* of the *Academy:* I mean of that cautelous *doctrine* of *withholding assent*, and being both *pro* and *con*, *sometimes* of this *side*, and *sometimes* of *that:* for *Socrates* his *death* hath made all his *friends* very *fearfull* of being too *dogmatical*. And *Plato* himself had too much *riches*, and withall too *much* of a *Courtier* in him to *hazard* the *dear prison* of his *soul*, viz. *his body*, merely for an *æthereal vehicle*. He had rather let his *soul flutter up* and *down* in *terrestrial matter*, or the *cage* it was *pent up* in, than *hazard* too *violent* an *opening* of it by the *hands* of the *Areopagus*. And the great *Roman Orator*, among the rest of *Plato*'s *sentiments*, had *learnt* this too; for although in his

Matth. 10. 17, 18, 21, 22, 28.

Plat. Phæd.

discour-

discourses he hath many *times* sufficiently laid *open* the *folly* of the *Heathen worship* and *Theology*, yet he knows how to bring *himself* off safe enough with the *people*; and will be *sure* to be *dogmatical* only in this, *That nothing is to be innovated in the Religion of a Commonwealth*, and that the *customs of our Ancestors are inviolably to be observed.* Which *principles*, had they been *true* as they were *safe* for the persons who spake them, the *Christian Religion* had never *gained* any *entertainment* in the *world*; for where-ever it *came*, it met with this *potent prejudice* that it was *looked* on as an *innovation*, and therefore was shrewdly *suspected* by the *Governours* of *Commonwealths*, and the *Preachers* of it punished as *factious and seditious persons*; which was all the *pretext* the wise *Politicians* of the *world* had for their *cruel* and *inhumane persecutions* of such *multitudes* of *peaceable and innocent Christians.* Now when these things were fore-told by the *Apostles* themselves before their *going abroad* so plainly, that with the same *faith* they did believe the *doctrine* they *Preached* to be *true*, they must *believe* that all these *things* should *come* to *pass*, what *courage* and *magnanimity* of *spirit* was it in *them* thus to *encounter dangers* and as it were *court* the *flames?* Nay and before the *time* was *come* that they must *die*, to *seal* the *truth* of their *doctrine*, their whole *life* was a *continual peregrination*, wherein they were as so many *Jobs* in *pilgrimage*, *encountred* with *perils* and *dangers on every side*; of which one of the most *painfull* and *successfull*, St. *Paul*, hath given in such a large *inventory* of his *perils*, that the very *reading* of them were enough to *undo* a poor *Epicurean Philosopher*, and at once to *spoil* him of the *two pillars* of his *happiness*, the *quietness* of his *mind* and *ease* of his *body*. Thus we see what a hazardous imployment that was which the *Apostles* went upon, and that it was such as they very well understood the difficulty of before they set upon it. 2 Cor. 6. 4, 5, 8, 9.

Secondly, *We cannot find out any rational motive which could carry them through so hazardous an employment, but the full convictions of their minds of the undoubted truth and certainty of the doctrine which they delivered.* We find before that no vulgar *motives* in the world could carry them upon that design which they went upon; Could they be *led* by *ambition* and *vain-glory*, who met with such *reproaches* where-ever they Sect. 11.

went; and not only perſecutions of the tongue, but the ſharper ones of the hands too? we never read of any but the *Primitive Chriſtians* who were *ambitious* of being *Martyrs*, and thought *long* 'till they were in the *flames*: which made *Arrius Antonius* being *Pro-conſul* of *Aſia*, when *Chriſtians* in multitudes beſet his *tribunal* and *thronged* in to be *condemned*, ſay to them, ὦ δειλοὶ, εἰ σὺλεπε ἀποθνήσκειν, κρημνὸς ἢ βρόχος ἔχετε. *O miſerable people, had not ye ways enough to end your lives at home, but ye muſt croud for an execution!* This was a higher *ambition* by far than any of thoſe *mancipia gloriæ*, thoſe *Chamæleons* that lived on the *breath* of *applauſe*, the *Heathen Philoſophers* ever reached to, who were, as *Tertullian* expreſſeth it, *homines gloriæ & eloquentiæ ſolius libidinoſi, unſatiable thirſters after the honour and eloquence of the world*; but the *Spirit* of a *Chriſtian* did *ſoar* too high to *quarry* on ſo *mean* a *prey*. When the more *ſober Heathens* had taken a *ſtricter notice* of the *carriages* and *lives* of the *Preachers* of the *Goſpel* and all their *genuine* followers, *they* inſtead of the *common* and *rude name* of *impoſtures*, *gave* them a more civil *title* of *Philoſophers*, and looked upon their *doctrine* as a ſublimer *kind* of *Philoſophy*, *Non utique divinum negotium exiſtimant ſed magis Philoſophiæ genus*, as *Tertullian* tells us, becauſe the *Philoſophers* pretended ſo much to *moral virtues* which they ſaw the *Chriſtians* ſo *excellent* in; but as *Tertullian* there *replies*, *Nomen hoc Philoſophorum Dæmonia non fugat, The Devil was never afraid of a Philoſopher's beard*, nor were *diſeaſes cured* by the *touch* of a *Philoſophick pallium*. There was ſomething more *Divine* in *Chriſtians* than in the *grave Philoſophers*; and that not only in reference to their *lives*, and the *Divine power* which was ſeen in them, but in reference to the truth and certainty of their *doctrine*, it being a true *character* given of *both*, by that ſame *excellent* Writer in *behalf* of the *Chriſtians* of his time: *Veritatem Philoſophi quidem affectant, poſſident autem Chriſtiani*; *What the Philoſophers deſired only, the Chriſtians enjoy*, which was *Truth*: and as he elſewhere more fully ſpeaks, *Mimicè Philoſophi affectant veritatem, & affectando corrumpunt, ut qui gloriam captant*; *Chriſtiani eam neceſſario appetunt & integri præſtant, ut qui ſaluti ſuæ curant. Truth is the Philoſopher's miſtreſs, which by courting he vitiates and corrupts, looking at nothing but his own glory: but truth is the Chriſtian's Matron,*

Tertul. ad Scapul. c. 5.

Apolog. c. 47.

Apolog. c. 46.

Ad Nationes, l. 1. c. 4.

Apol. c. 46.

Matron, whose directions he observes and follows, because he regards no glory but that to come. And to let them further see what a difference there was between a *Christian* and a *Philosopher*, he concludes that *discourse* with these words, *Quid adeo simile Philosophus & Christianus? Græciæ Discipulus & cœli? famæ negotiator & vitæ? verborum & factorum operator? rerum ædificator & destructor? amicus & inimicus erroris? veritatis interpolator & integrator? furator ejus & custos? As much distance* (saith he) *as there is between* Greece *and Heaven, between applause and eternal glory, between words and things, between building and destroying, between truth and error, between a plagiary and corrupter of truth, and a preserver and advancer of it; so much is there between a Philosopher and a Christian.* The *Heathens* might *suspect* indeed some kind of *affinity* between the first *Preachers* of the *Gospel* and the ancient *Sophists* of *Greece*, because of their *frequent* going from *place* to *place*, and pretending a *kind* of *Enthusiasm* as they did: but as much *difference* as there is between a *Knight-Errant* and *Hercules*, between a *Mountebank* and *Hippocrates*, that and much greater there is between a *Greek Sophist* and an *Apostle*. *Socrates* in *Plato*'s *Euthydemus* hath excellently *discovered* the *vanity* and *futility* of those *persons* under the *persons* of *Euthydemus* and *Dionysodorus*, and so likewise in his *Protagoras*; their intent was only like the *Retiaries* in the *Roman Spectacles* to *catch* their *adversaries* in a *net*; to *intangle* them with some *captious question* or other; but how vastly *different* from this was the *design* of the *Apostles* who abhorr'd those *endless contentions* which then were in the *Heathen world*; and came to shew them that *Truth* which was revealed with an intent of making them *better men!*

We see the *Apostles* were not carried forth by any *mean* and *vulgar motives*, neither did they drive on any *private ends* of their own; all that they minded was the *promoting* of the *doctrine* which they *preached*. Nay they accounted no *hazards* comparable with the *advantage* which the *world* enjoyed through the *propagation* of the *Christian Religion*. This shewed a truly *noble* and *generous spirit* in them which would not be hindred from *doing* the world *good*, though they found so bad *entertainment* from it; yea they *rejoyced* in their greatest *sufferings* which they underwent in so *good* a *cause*; wherein those *Sect.* 12.

those *Primitive Christians* who were the genuine *followers* of the *Apostles*, did so far *imitate* them, that, *etiam damnati gratias agunt*, they gave the *Judges thanks* that they thought them worthy to lose their *lives* in a *cause* which they had reason to *triumph* in, though they *died* for it. And when any of them were *apprehended*, they discovered so little fear of *punishment*, *Ut unum solummodo quod non ante fuerint pœniteret, That nothing troubled them so much as that they had been Christians no sooner*, as one of their number speaks. And when the *Heathens* usually scoffed at them and called them *Sarmentitii* and *Semaxii* because they were *burned* upon the *Cross*, one of them in the name of the rest answers, *Hic est habitus victoriæ nostræ, hæc palmata vestis, tali curru triumphamus*; The *Cross* was only their triumphant *Chariot*, which carried them sooner to *Heaven*. Now this *courage* and *resolution* of *spirit* which was seen in the first *planters* of *Christianity* in the world, made all *serious* and *inquisitive persons* look more narrowly into those *things*, which made men *slight* so much the common *bug-bears* of humane nature, *sufferings* and *death*. *Quis enim non contemplatione ejus concutitur, ad requirendum quid intus in re sit? & quis non ubi requisivit accedit? ubi accessit pati exoptat?* These *sufferings* made men *enquire*; this *enquiry* made them *believe*; that *belief* made them as *willing* to *suffer themselves* as they had seen *others* do it before *them*. Thus it appeared to be true in them, *Exquisitior quæque crudelitas, illecebra magis est sectæ; plures efficimur quoties metimur à vobis; semen est sanguis Christianorum; The cruelty of their enemies did but increase their number; the harvest of their pretended justice was but the seed-time of Christianity, and no seed was so fruitfull as that which was steeped in the blood of Martyrs.* Thence *Justin Martyr* ingenuously saith of himself, That while he was a *Platonick Philosopher*, he derided and scoffed at the *Christians*; but when he considered their great *courage* and *constancy* in *dying* for their *profession*, he could not think those could possibly be men *wicked* and *voluptuous*, who when *offers* of life were made them, would rather choose *death* than *deny Christ*. By which he found plainly that there was a *higher spirit* in *Christianity* than could be obtained by the *sublime notions* and *speculations* of *Plato*, and that a poor ignorant Christian would do and suffer more for the *sake* of *Christ* than any

Tertul. Apol. c. 46.

Minutius Felix.

Tertul. Ap. cap. 5

Id. Ib.

any of the *Academy* in *defence* of their master *Plato* Now since all men naturally abhor *sufferings*, what is it which should so powerfully *alter* the *nature* and *disposition* of *Christians* above all other persons, that they alone should seem in that to have forgot *humanity*, that not only with *patience*, but with *joy* they *endured torments* and *abode* the *flames?* What! were they all *possessed* with a far more than *Stoical Apothy*, that no sense of pain could work at all upon them? or were they all *besotted* and *infatuated persons* that did not know what it was they *underwent?* It is true some of the more *blind* and *wilfull Heathens* derided them as such; but who were the more *infatuated*, let any sober person *judge:* they who *slighted* and *rejected* a *doctrine* of so great *concernment*, which came attested with so much *resolution* and *courage* in the *professors* of it; or they who were so far *perswaded* of the *truth* of it, that they would rather *die* than *deny* it? *Dicimus & palam dicimus, & vobis torquentibus lacerati & cruenti vociferamur, Deum colimus per Christum.* They were not ashamed to believe in the *blood* of *Christ* even when their own *blood* ran *down* before their *eyes*, and *confess Christ* with their *mouths* when their *bodies* were upon the *rack*. Certainly then there were some very *powerfull* and *convincing arguments* which *buoyed* up the *spirits* of true *Christians* in that *deluge* of *sufferings* which they were to *swim* through; it must be a *strong* and *well-grounded faith* which would *hold* out under so great *tryals*, and they could not be to *seek* for the most *perswasive motives* to *faith*, who were so ready to give an *account* to others of the *hope* that was in them, and to *perswade* all other *persons* to the embracing of it. With what face and confidence otherwise could they *perswade* men to embrace a *doctrine* so *dangerous* as that was, had there not been *motives sufficient* to bear up against the *weight* of *sufferings*, and *arguments perswasive* to *convince* them of the *undoubted certainty* of that *doctrine* which they encouraged them to believe?

Tertull. Ap. cap. 21.

Now that which *appears* to have been the main *ground* of *satisfaction* to the *Primitive Christians* as to the *truth* and *certainty* of the *Doctrine* of *Christ*, was this, That the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel* was at first *delivered* to the *world* by those *persons* who were themselves *eye-witnesses* of all the *miracles* which our *Saviour* wrought in *confirmation* of the *truth* of what he *spake*. *Sect.* 13.

ſpake. They were ſuch *perſons* who had been themſelves *preſent*, not only to hear *moſt* of our *Saviour's* admirable *diſcourſes* when he was in the *world*, but to ſee all thoſe *glorious things* which were *done* by him, to make it *appear* that he was *immediately* ſent from *God*. Let us now *appeal* to our own *faculties*, and *examine* a little what *rational evidence* could *poſſibly* be deſired, that the *doctrine* of the *Goſpel* was *true*, which *God* did not afford to the world? What could the *perſons* who were the *auditors* of our *Saviour* deſire more as an *evidence* that he *came* from *God*, than his *doing* ſuch things which were certainly above any *created power*, either *humane* or *diabolical*, and therefore muſt needs be Divine? What could other *perſons deſire more* who were not *preſent* at the *doing* of theſe *miracles*, but that the *report* of them ſhould be *conveyed* to them in an *undoubted manner* by thoſe *perſons* who were *eye-witneſſes* of them, and made it *appear* to the *world* they were far from any *intention* of *deceiving* it? Now this makes the *Apoſtles* themſelves in their own *writings* (though they were *divinely inſpired*) *appeal* to the *rational evidence* of the *truth* of the *things* in that they were *delivered* by them who were *eye-witneſſes* of them. There St. *Peter* ſpeaks thus to the diſperſed *Jews*, 2 Pet. 1. 16. οὐ γὰρ σεσοφισμένοις μύθοις ἐξακολουθήσαντες ἐγνωρίσαμεν ὑμῖν τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δύναμιν καὶ παρουσίαν, ἀλλ' ἐπόπται γενηθέντες τῆς ἐκείνου μεγαλειότητος. *For we have not followed cunningly-deviſed fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but were eye-witneſſes of his Majeſty.* The *power* and *coming* of *Chriſt* which the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks of, was not as ſome improbably conceive, either his *general coming* to *judgment* upon the *world*, or his *particular coming* upon the *Nation* of the *Jews*; but by an *Hendyades*, by his *power* and *coming* is meant his *powerfull appearance* in the *world*, whereby he mightily diſcovered himſelf to be the *Son* of *God*. Now this, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, was no σεσοφισμένος μύθος, not like the *Heathen Mythology* concerning the παρουσίαι and ἐπιφανείαι of their *Gods* among them (which were ſo frequently believed among them, that *Dionyſius Halicarnaſſæus* condemns the *Epicureans*, becauſe they did deride τὰς ἐπιφανείας τῶν θεῶν, *the appearances of their Gods in the world*) now, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, aſſure your ſelves, this is no ſuch *appearance* of a *God* on Earth as that among the *Heathens* was; for, ſaith he, *Antiq. l. 2. pag.* 128.

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we our *selves* who declare these *things* were ἐπόπται, we fully understood this μέγα μυστήριον, *this great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh*, for we saw his μεγαλειότης, *that great majesty which attended him in all which he spake or did*; we saw all those μεγαλεῖα τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the great things of God*, which were Act. 2. 11. manifest in him, all those *miraculous operations* which were wrought by him. Therefore as this was a great *confirmation* of the *faith* of the *Apostles* themselves that they *saw* all these *things*, so we see it was of great *concernment* to the *world* in order to their *belief* that the *Gospel* was no *cunningly-devised fable*, in that it was *delivered* by such who were ἐπόπται, *eye-witnesses* of what they declared. To the same purpose St. *John* speaks *ad conciliandam fidem*, to make it appear how *true* what they delivered was, in the entrance of his *Epistle*; *That which* 1 Joh. 1. 1, 2, 3. *was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the father, and was manifested unto us) That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you.* We see what great *force* and *weight* the *Apostle* lays upon this, that they *delivered* nothing but what they had *seen* and *heard*; as they *heard* the *doctrine* of *Christ*, so they *saw* the *miracles* which he *wrought* in *confirmation* of it. St. *Luke* likewise in the *beginning* of his *Gospel* declares that he intended to write Luk. 1. 1, 2, 3. *nothing* but *what he had perfect understanding of from such persons who had been* αὐτόπται, *eye-witnesses and instruments themselves in part of what was written*, for that is meant by παρέδοσαν τὸν λόγον: *and those things which were written*, he saith were πεπληροφορημένα ἐν ἡμῖν πράγματα, *things which are abundantly proved to be true*; for being *matters of fact*, there could be no *stronger proof* of them, than by such who were *eye-witnesses* of what they spake. And this we find the *Apostles* themselves very *cautious* about, in the *choice* of a new *Apostle* in the *room* of *Judas*. *Wherefore of these men which have companied with us,* Act. 1. 21, 22. *all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of* John, *unto that same day that he was taken from us, must one be ordained to be a witness of his resurrection*: For, because *Christ was mightily declared to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead*, (as that which

was the great *Seal* of our *Saviour's* being the *Son* of *God* therefore we find the *Apoſtles* ſo frequently *atteſting* the *truth* of the *reſurrection* of *Chriſt*, and that themſelves were *eye-witneſſes* of it. Act. 2. 32. *Thus Jeſus*, ſaith *Peter*, *hath God raiſed up, whereof we all are witneſſes.* And again, *And killed the Prince of life, whom* 3. 15. *God hath raiſed up from the dead, whereof we are witneſſes*; and both *Peter* and *John* to the *Sanhedrin*; *For we cannot but* 4. 20. *ſpeak the things which we have ſeen and heard.* And the whole *Colledge* of *Apoſtles* afterwards, *And we are his witneſſes of* 5. 32. *theſe things, and ſo is alſo the Holy Ghoſt, whom God hath given to them that obey him.* In which words they give them that *twofold rational evidence* which did manifeſt the *undoubted truth* of what they *ſpake*; for they delivered nothing but what *themſelves* were *witneſſes* of, and withall was declared to be *true* by the *power* of the *Holy Ghoſt* in the *miracles* which were wrought *by* and *upon* believers. Afterwards we read the *ſum* of the *Apoſtles* Preaching, and the *manner* uſed by them to *perſuade* men of the *truth* of it, in the *words* of *Peter* to 10. 39, 40, 41, *Cornelius* and *his company*, *How God anointed Jeſus of Nazareth* 42. *with the Holy Ghoſt and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the Devil, for God was with him: And we are witneſſes of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews and in Hieruſalem, whom they ſlew and hanged on a tree: Him God raiſed up the third day, and ſhewed him openly, not to all the people, but unto witneſſes choſen before of God, even to us who did eat and drink with him after he roſe from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.* By all which we ſee what care *God* was pleaſed to *take* for the *ſatisfaction* of the *world* in point of *rational evidence*, as to the *truth* of the *matters* which were *diſcovered* concerning our *Saviour Chriſt*, becauſe he made *choice* of ſuch *perſons* to be the *preachers* and *writers* of theſe *things* who were the *beſt* able to *ſatisfie* the *world* about them, *viz.* ſuch as had been *eye-witneſſes* of them.

Sect. 14. Now in order to the making it more fully *evident* what *ſtrength* there was in this *Teſtimony* given by the *Apoſtles* to the *miracles* of *Chriſt*, we ſhall more fully manifeſt the *rational evidence* which attended it in theſe following *propoſitions*.

Prop. 1. *Where the truth of a doctrine depends upon a matter of fact, the truth*

truth of the doctrine is sufficiently manifested, if the matter of fact be evidently proved in the highest way it is capable of. Thus it is in reference to the *doctrine* of *Christ*; for the *truth* of that is so *interwoven* with the *truth* of the *story* of *Christ*, that if the *relations* concerning *Christ* be *true*, his *doctrine* must needs be *divine* and *infallible*. For if it be undoubtedly *true*, that there was such a *person* as *Christ born* at *Bethlehem*, who did so many *miracles*, and at last suffered the *death* of the *Cross*, and after he had lain three *days* in the *grave rose again* from the *dead*, what *reason imaginable* can I have to *question*, but that the *Testimony* of this *person* was certainly *Divine*, and consequently what-ever he *preached* to the world was most *certain* and *undoubted truth*. So that if we have clear *evidence* as to the *truth* of these *passages* concerning our *Saviour*, we must likewise *believe* his *doctrine*, which came *attested* with such *pregnant evidences* of a *Divine commission* which he had from *God* to the *world*. No *Prince* can think he hath any *reason* to refuse *audience* to an *Embassador*, when he finds his *Credentials* such as he may rely *upon*, although *himself* doth not *see* the *sealing* of them; much less *reason* have we to *question* the *truth* of the *doctrine* of the *Gospel*, if we have sufficient *evidence* of the *truth* of the *matters* of *fact* concerning *Christ*, in such a way as those *things* are capable of being proved.

The greatest evidence which can be given to a matter of fact, is the attesting of it by those persons who were eye-witnesses of it. Prop. 2. This is the *Foundation* whereon the firmest *assent* is *built*, as to any *matter* of *fact*; for although we conceive we have *reason* to *suspect* the *truth* of a *story*, as long as it is *conveyed* only in a *general* way, by an uncertain *fame* and *tradition*; yet when it *comes* to be *attested* by a sufficient *number* of *credible persons* who profess themselves the *eye-witnesses* of it, it is accounted an *unreasonable thing* to *distrust* any longer the *truth* of it; especially in these two *cases*. 1. *When the matter they bear witness to is a thing which they might easily and clearly perceive.* 2. *When many witnesses exactly agree in the same Testimony.*

1. *When the matter it self is of that nature that it may be fully perceived by those who saw it: i. e.* if it be a common *object* of *sense*. And thus it certainly was as to the *person* and *actions* of *Jesus Christ*. For he *was* of the same *nature* with *mankind*; and they had as great *evidence* that they *conversed* with *Jesus*

Christ in the *flesh*, as we can have that we *converse one* with *another*. The *miracles* of *Christ* were *real* and *visible miracles*; they could be no *illusions* of *senses*, nor *deceits* of their *eyes*; the *man* who was born *blind* and *cured* by our *Saviour*, was *known* to have been *born blind* through all the *Country*, and his *cure* was after as *publick* as his *blindness* before, and ac-
Joh. 9. 26. knowledged by the greatest *enemies* of *Christ* at the time of
Luk. 7. 12. its being done. When *Christ* raised up the dead *man* at *Naim*, it was before *much people*, and such *persons* in probability who were many of them *present* at his *death*. But lest there might be any *suspicion* as to *him*, that he *was* not really *dead*, the
Joh. 11. 39. *case* is plain and beyond all *dispute* in *Lazarus*, who had been to the *knowledge* of all *persons* thereabouts *dead four days*; here could be no *deceit* at all when the *stone* was *rowled away*, and *Lazarus* came forth in the *presence* of *them all*. And yet further the *death* and *passion* of our *Saviour* was a *plain object* of *sense* done in *presence* of his greatest *adversaries*. The *souldiers* themselves were sufficient *witnesses* of his being really *dead* when they came to *break* his *bones*, and *spared* him because they saw he was *dead already*. At his *resurrection* the *stone* was *rowled away* from the *Sepulchre* and no *body* found therein, although the *Sepulchre* was *guarded* by *souldiers*, and the *Disciples* of *Christ* all so *fearfull*, that they were *dispersed* up and *down* in several *places*. And that it was the same *real body* which he *rose* withall, and no *aereal vehicle*, appears by *Thomas* his *scrupulosity* and *unbelief*, *who would not believe unless he*
Joh. 20. 25, 27. *might put his hands into the hole of his side, and see in his hands the print of the nails*; now our *Saviour* condescending so far as to *satisfie* the *incredulity* of *Thomas*, hath made it thereby *evident* that the *body* which our *Saviour rose* from the *grave* with, was the same *individual body* which before was *crucified* and *buried* in the *Sepulchre*. And we find all the *Apostles* together upon our *Saviour's appearance* to them after his *resurrection*, so far from being *credulous* in *embracing* a *phantasm* instead of *Christ*, that they *suspected* that it was either a *mere phantasm*, or an *evil spirit* which appeared among them; upon which it is said, *they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit*. Which our *Saviour* could not beat them off from, but by appealing to the judgment of their *senses*, *Handle me and see*; *for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye*
Luk. 24. 37.
39.

see

see me have; and afterwards more fully to convince them, *he did eat in the midst of them.* Now the *more suspicious* and *incredulous* the *Apostles* themselves at *first were*, the greater *evidence* is it how *far* they were from any *design* of *abusing* the *world* in what they after *preached* unto it, and what strong *conviction* there was in the *thing* it self, which was able to *satisfie* such *scrupulous* and *suspicious* persons. 43.

2. *When many witnesses concurr in the same Testimony.* Nothing can *disparage* more the *truth* of a *testimony*, than the *counter-witness* of *such* who were *present* at the same *actions*; but when all the *witnesses* fully *agree* not only in the *substance*, but in all *material circumstances* of the *story*, what *ground* or *reason* can there *be* to *suspect* a *forgery* or *design* in it; especially when the *persons* cannot by any *fears* or *threatnings* be brought to *vary* from each *other* in it! Thus it is in our *present case*, we find no real *dissent* at all mentioned either as to the *birth*, *miracles*, *life*, *death*, or *resurrection* of *Jesus Christ*; all the *witnesses attest* the same *things*, though *writing* in *different places*, and upon *different occasions*; no *alteration* in any circumstance of the *story*, out of any *design* of *pleasing* or *gratifying* any *persons* by it. Most of our *Saviour's miracles*, not only his *Apostles*, but the *people* and his very *enemies* were *witnesses* of, whose *posterity* to this *day* dare not *deny* the *truth* of such *strange works* which were wrought by him. And for his *resurrection*, it would be very *strange* that *five hundred persons* should all *agree* in the same *thing*, and that no *torments* or *death* could bring *any* of *them* to *deny* the *truth* of it, had there not been the greatest *certainty* in it:

There can be no reason to suspect such a testimony which is given by eye-witnesses, but either from questioning their knowledge of the things they spake of, or their fidelity in reporting them. Now there is not the least *ground* to *doubt* either of *these*, in *reference* to those *persons* who gave *testimony* to the *world* concerning the *person* and *actions* of our *blessed Saviour*. *Sect.* 15. *Prop.* 3.

For *first*, *They were such as were intimately conversant both with the person and actions of Jesus Christ*; whom he had chosen and *trained* up for that very *end*, that they might be *sufficiently qualified* to *acquaint* the *world* with the *truth* of *things concerning himself* after his *resurrection* from the *dead*. And accordingly they *followed* him *up* and *down* wheresoever he *went*;

went; they were with *him* in his *ſolitudes* and *retirements*, and had thereby *occaſion* to *obſerve* all his *actions*, and to take *notice* of the *unſpotted innocency* of his *life*. Some of his *Diſciples* were with *him* in his *tranſfiguration*, others in his *agony* and *bloody ſweat*, they heard the *expreſſions* which came from his *mouth*; in all which he *diſcovered* a *wonderfull ſubmiſſion* to the *will* of *God*, and a great *readineſs* of *mind* to *ſuffer* for the *good* of the *world*. Now therefore the firſt *thing* cannot at all be *queſtioned*, *their means of knowing the truth of what they ſpake.*

2. Neither, *ſecondly*, is there any *reaſon* to *ſuſpect their fidelity*
1. *in reporting what they knew*: For, 1. *The truth of this doctrine wrought ſo far upon them, that they parted with all their worldly ſubſiſtence for the ſake of it*: Although their *riches* were not *great*, yet their *way* of *ſubſiſtence* in the *world* was *neceſſary*; they left their *houſes*, their *wives* and *children*, and *all* for *Chriſt*, and that not to *gain* any higher *preferments* in this *world* (which had they *done*, it would have *rendred* their *deſign ſuſpicious* to the *curious* and *inquiſitive world*) but they let *go* at leaſt a *quiet* and *eaſie life*, for one moſt *troubleſome* and *dangerous*. So that it is not, how much they parted *withall*, but how *freely* they *did* it, and with what *chearfulneſs* they *underwent diſgraces*, *perſecutions*, nay *death* it ſelf for the *ſake* of the *Goſpel*. Now can it be *imagined*, that ever *men* were ſo *prodigal* of their *eaſe* and *lives*, as to *throw* both of them *away* upon a *thing* which *themſelves* were not fully *aſſured* of the *truth* of? It had been the higheſt *folly* imaginable, to have deceived *themſelves* in a *thing* of ſo *great moment* to them, as the *truth* of the *doctrine* which they *preached* was; becauſe all their *hopes* and *happineſs* depended upon the *truth* of that *doctrine* which they *preached*. And as *Tertullian* obſerves, *Non fas eſt ulli de ſuâ religione mentiri*; for, ſaith he, *he that ſays he worſhips any thing beſides what he doth, he denies what he doth worſhip, and tranſfers his worſhip upon another, and thereby doth not worſhip that which he thus denies*; Beſides, what *probability* is there *men* ſhould *lye* for the *ſake* of that *Religion* which tells *them* that thoſe which *do* ſo ſhall not *receive* the *reward* which is *promiſed* to *thoſe* who *cordially adhere* unto it! Nay, they
1 Cor. 15. 19. declared *themſelves* to be the moſt *miſerable* of all *perſons if their hopes were only in this preſent life*. Can we now *think* that *any* who had the *common reaſon* of *men*, would *part* with *all* the

content-

contentments of this *world*, and *expose themselves* to continual *hazards*, and at last *undergo death* it *self* for the *sake* of *something* which was *merely* the *fiction* of their own *brains?* What should make *them* so *sedulous* and *industrious* in *preaching* such *things* that they could *say necessity was laid upon them*, *yea*, *wo was unto them if they preached not the Gospel*, when yet they saw so many *woes* attending them in the *preaching* of it, had there not been some more *powerfull attractive* in the *beauty* and *excellency* of the *doctrine* which they *preached*, than any could be in the *ease* and *tranquillity* of this present *world?* Thus we see the *fidelity* of the *Apostles* manifested in such a *way* as no other *witnesses* were ever yet *willing* to *hazard* theirs. And therefore *Origen* deservedly condemns *Celsus* of a *ridiculous impertinency*, when he would *parallel* the *relations* of *Herodotus* and *Pindarus* concerning *Aristeus Proconnesius* with those of the *Apostles* concerning *Christ*; For, saith he, *did either of these two venture their lives upon the truth of what they writ concerning him, as the Apostles did to attest the truth of what they preached concerning our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?*

1 Cor. 9. 16.

L. 3. c. *Celsum.* p. 127.

2. The *fidelity* of the *Apostles* is evident in their *manner of reporting the things which they deliver.* For if ever there may be any *thing* gathered from the *manner* of *expression*, or the τὸ ἦθος τῦ λόγυ, concerning the *particular temper* and *disposition* of the *person* from whom it comes, we may certainly *read* the greatest *fidelity* in the *Apostles* from the peculiar *manner* of their *expressing* themselves to the *world.* Which they do, *Sect.* 16.

1. *With the greatest impartiality:* not declaring only what was *glorious* and *admirable* to the world, but what they *knew* would be accounted *foolishness* by it. They who had sought only to have been *admired* for the *rare discoveries* which they *brought* to the *world*, would be *sure* to *conceal* any thing which might be accounted *ridiculous*; but the *Apostles* fixed themselves *most* on what was most *contemptible* in the *eyes* of the world, and *what* they were most *mocked* and *derided* for, that they *delighted* most in the *preaching* of, which was the *Cross* of *Christ.* *Paul* was so much in *love* with this, which was a *stumbling-block* to the *Jews*, and *foolishness* to the *Greeks*, *that he valued the knowledge of nothing else in comparison of the knowledge of Christ and him crucified.* Nay he elsewhere saith, *God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of Christ.* What now

1 Cor. 2. 2. Phil. 3. 8. Gal. 6. 14.

should

ſhould be the *reaſon* that they ſhould *rejoyce* in that *moſt* which was moſt *deſpicable* to the *world*, had not they ſeen far greater *truth* and excellency in it, than in the moſt ſublime *ſpeculations* concerning *God* or the *ſouls* of *men* in the *School* of *Plato* or any other *Heathen Philoſophers?* That all men ſhould be *bound* in order to their *ſalvation*, to *believe* in one who was *crucified* at *Hieruſalem*, was a ſtrange *doctrine* to the unbelieving world: but if the *Apoſtles* had but *endeavoured* to have ſuited their *doctrine* to the *School* of *Plato*, what rare perſons might they have been *accounted* among the *Heathen Philoſophers!* Had they only in general *terms* diſcourſed of the *Benignity* of the *Divine nature*, and the *Manifeſtations* of *Divine goodneſs* in the *world*, and that, in *order* to the *bringing* of the *ſouls* of *men* to a nearer *participation* of the *Divine nature*, the perfect *Idea* of true *goodneſs*, and the *expreſs image* of the *perſon of God*, and the *reſplendency of his glory* had *veiled* himſelf in *Humane nature*, and had every-where *ſcattered* ſuch *beams* of *light* and *goodneſs*, as *warmed* and *invigorated* the *frozen ſpirits* of *men* with higher *ſentiments* of *God* and *themſelves*, and *raiſed* them up above the *feculency* of this *terreſtrial matter* to *breathe* in a *freer air*, and *converſe* with more *noble objects*, and by *degrees* to *fit* the *ſouls* of *men* for thoſe more *pure illapſes* of *real goodneſs*, which might *always ſatisfie* the *ſoul's deſires*, and yet *always keep them up* 'till the *ſoul* ſhould be *ſunning* it ſelf to all *eternity* under the *immediate beams* of *Light* and *Love*: And that after this *Incarnate Deity* had *ſpread* abroad the *wings* of his *Love* for a *while* upon this *lower world*, 'till by his *gentle heat* and *incubation* he had *quickned* the more pliable *world* to ſome *degree* of a *Divine Life*, he then *retreated himſelf* back again into the *ſuperiour world*, and put off that *veil* by which he made himſelf *known* to thoſe who are here *confined* to the *priſons* of their *bodies*: Thus, I ſay, had the *Apoſtles* minded *applauſe* among the *admired Philoſophers* of the *Heathens*, how eaſie had it been for them to have *made* ſome conſiderable *additions* to their *higheſt ſpeculations*, and have left out any *thing* which might ſeem ſo *mean* and *contemptible* as the *death* of the *Son* of *God!* But this they were ſo far from, that the *main thing* which they *preached* to the *world*, was, the *vanity* of *humane wiſdom* without *Chriſt*, and the *neceſſity* of all men's *believing* in that *Jeſus* who was *crucified* at *Hieruſalem*.

The

The *Apostles* indeed discover very *much*, *infinitely more* than ever the most *lofty Platonist* could do, concerning the *goodness* and *love of God to mankind*; but that wherein they manifested *the love of God to the world, was, that he gave his only-begotten* Joh. 3. 16. *Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. And that herein was the Love of God manifested,* Rom. 5. 8. *that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* And that *this was the greatest truth and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus* 1 Tim. 1. 15. *Christ came into the world to save sinners.* They never dreamt of any *Divine goodness* which should make *men* happy without *Christ*: No, it was their *design* to *persuade* the *world* that all the *communications* of *God's goodness* to the *world* were *wholly* in and *through Jesus Christ*; and it is *impossible* that any should think *otherwise*, unless *Plato* knew *more* of the *mind* of *God* than our *blessed Saviour*, and *Plotinus* than Saint *Paul*. Can we think now that the *Apostles* should *hazard* the *reputation* of their own *wits* so much as they did to the *world*, and be accounted *babblers*, and *fools*, and *mad-men*, for *preaching* the *way* of *salvation* to be only by a *person crucified between two thieves at Hierusalem*, had they not been convinced not only of the *truth* but *importance* of it, and that it concerned *men* as much to *believe* it, as it did to avoid *eternal misery?* Did Saint *Paul* preach ever the *less* the *words* of *truth* and *soberness*, because he was told to his face *that his Learning had made him mad?* But if he was *besides himself, it was for Christ*; and what wonder was it if the *Love of Christ* in the *Apostle* should make him willing to lose his *reputation* for him, seeing *Christ made himself of no reputation*, that he might be in a *capacity* to do us *good?* We see the *Apostles were not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ*, because they knew *it was the power of God to salvation*, and therefore neither in their *preaching* or their *writings* would they *omit* any of those *passages* concerning our *Saviour's death*, which might be *accounted* the most *dishonourable* to his *person*. Which is certainly as great an *evidence* of their *fidelity* as can be expected; which makes *Origen* say that the Disciples of *Christ* writ all things φιλαλήθως καὶ ἐυγνωμόνως, *with a great deal of candor and* L. 3. c. Celf. *love of truth.* οὐ καταιδούμενοι τὰ περὶ αὐτῶν ἀδοξίαν ἰσχύος τὸ δοκῦν τοῖς πολλοῖς ἀφρόνως τῷ λόγῳ τῆς χειστιανῶν φέρειν· *not concealing from the world those passages of the life of Christ, which would be accounted most foolish and ridiculous.*

2. *With the greateſt plainneſs and ſimplicity of ſpeech.* Such whoſe *deſign* is to *impoſe* upon the *minds* of *men* with ſome *cunningly-deviſed fables*, *love* as much *ambiguity* as ever *Apollo* did in his moſt *winding Oracles*, of whom it is ſaid,

Ambage nexa Delphico mos eſt Deo
Arcana tegere.

In 4. Æneid. *Servius* tells us, that *Jupiter Ammon* was therefore *pictured* with *Rams-horns*, becauſe his *anſwers* had as many *turnings* and *windings* as they had. But the *horns* which *Moſes* was wont to be *pictured* with, did only note *light* and *perſpicuity* (from the ambiguity of קרן, which notes the *ſending forth of rayes of light like a horn,*) and yet *Moſes* himſelf was *veiled* in *compariſon* of the *openneſs* and *plainneſs* of *ſpeech* which was in the *Apoſtles*. *Impoſtors* caſt a *miſt* of many *dark* and *cloudy words* before *them*, but when they are once *brought* into the *open light*, their *vizard* falls off, and their *deformity appears*. Such *perſons* delight in *ſoaring* quite out of the *apprehenſions* of *thoſe* who follow them, and never think *themſelves* better *recompenſed* for their *pains*, than when they are moſt *admired* and leaſt *underſtood*. But never was *Chriſtianity* more *diſhonoured*, than when men brought it from its *native ſimplicity* and *plainneſs*, into a company of *cloudy* and *inſignificant expreſſions*, which are ſo far from making *men* better underſtand the *truth* of it, that it was certainly the *Devil*'s deſign by ſuch *obſcure terms* to make way for a *myſtery* to be advanced, (but it was of *iniquity*,) and ſoon after, we ſee the *effect* of it in another *Oracle* ſet up at *Rome* inſtead of *Delphos*; and all the *pretence* of it, was the *obſcurity* ſuppoſed in *Scripture*. What! *darkneſs* come by the *riſing* of the *Sun!* Or is the *Sun* at laſt grown ſo *beggarly*, that he is *fain* to borrow *light* of the *Earth?* Muſt the *Scripture* be *beholding* to the *Church* for its *clearneſs*, and *Chriſt* himſelf not ſpeak *intelligibly*, unleſs the *Pope* be his *Interpreter?* Did *Chriſt reveal* to the world the *way* to *ſalvation*, and yet leave men to *ſeek* which was it, 'till a *Guide* never heard of in the *Scripture* come to *direct* them in the *way* to it? What *ſtrange witneſſes* were the *Apoſtles*, if they did not *ſpeak* the *truth* with *plainneſs?* How had men been to *ſeek* as to the *truth* of *Chriſtianity*, if the *Apoſtles* had not declared

declared the *doctrine* of the *Gospel* with all *evidence* and *perspicuity*? Whom must we *believe* in this case, the *Apostles* or the *Roman Oracle*? The *Apostles* they tell us *they speak with all plainness of speech*, and for that end purposely lay aside *all excellency of words* and *humane wisdom*, that men might not be to seek for their *meaning* in a matter of so great *moment*; that *the Gospel was hid to none but such as are lost, and whose eyes are blinded by the God of this world*; that the *doctrine* revealed by them is a *light* to direct us in our *way* to *Heaven*, and a *rule* to *walk* by; and it is a strange *property* of *light* to be *obscure*, and of a *rule* to be *crooked*. But it is not only *evident* from the *Apostles* own *affirmations*, that they laid aside all *affected obscurity*, *ambiguous expressions*, and *Philosophical terms*, whereby the *world* might have been to *seek* for what they were to *believe*, but it is likewise *clear* from the very *nature* of the *doctrine* they *preached*, and the *design* of their *preaching* of it. What need *Rhetorick* in plain *truths*? or *affected phrases* in giving *evidence*? How *incongruous* would *obscure expressions* have been to the design of *saving souls* by the *foolishness* of *preaching*? For if they had industriously spoken in their *preaching*, above the *capacities* of those they spake to, they could never have *converted* a *soul* without a *miracle*; for the ordinary *way* of *conversion* must be by the *understanding*; and how could that *work* upon the *understanding*, which was so much above it? But, saith the *Apostle*, *we preach not our selves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and our selves your servants for Jesus sake*. If they had sought *themselves* or their own *credit* and *reputation*, there might have been some *reason* that they should have *used* the *way* of the *Sophists* among the *Greeks*, and by *declamatory speeches* to have *inhanced* their *esteem* among the *vulgar*. But the *Apostles* disowned and rejected all these *vulgar artifices* of *mean* and *low-spirited men*; they laid aside all *those enticing words* ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας *of the way of the Heathen Sophists*, and declared the *Testimony* of *God* with *spiritual evidence*; *they handled not the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commended themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God*: Now what could be so *suitable* to such a *design*, as the greatest *plainness* and *faithfulness* in what they spake? We find in the testimony of the *Apostles*, οὐδὲν νόθον καὶ κυβευτικὸν καὶ πεπλασμένον καὶ παντῶς ον, as *Origen* speaks, *Nothing that is spurious or counterfeit*,

2 Cor. 3. 12. 1 Cor. 2. 1, 4. 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4. 2 Cor. 4. 5. 1 Cor. 2. 4. 2 Cor. 4. 2. *Orig. c. Celsi. l.* 3. *p.* 135.

feit, nothing ſavouring of the cunning craftineſs of ſuch as lie in wait to deceive; and, ſaith he, *it is impoſſible to think that men never bred up in the Sophiſtry of the Greeks, nor experienced in the Rhetorical inſinuations uſed among them, could ever be able ſo ſuddenly to perſuade the world to embrace that which had been a figment of their own brains.* The truth is, the *Apoſtles* ſpeak like *men* very *confident* of the *truth* of what they *ſpeak*, and not like *ſuch* who were *fain* to fetch in the *help* of all their *Topicks*, to find out ſome *probable arguments* to make men *believe* that which it is *probable* they did not *believe themſelves*, which was moſt commonly the caſe of the great *Orators* among the *Heathens*. We find no *pedantick flouriſhes*, no *flattering inſinuations*, no *affected cadencies*, no ſuch great *care* of the *riſing* and *falling* of *words* in the *ſeveral ſentences*, which make up ſo great a *part* of that which was accounted *eloquence* in the *Apoſtles* times. Theſe *things* were too mean a *prey* for the *ſpirits* of the *Apoſtles* to *quarry* upon; every thing in them was *grave* and *ſerious*, every *word* had its due *weight*, every *ſentence brimfull* of *ſpiritual matter*, their whole *diſcourſe* moſt *becoming* the *Majeſty* and *Authority* of that *ſpirit* which they *ſpake* by. And therein was *ſeen* a great *part* of the *infinite wiſdom* of *God* in the *choice* he made of the *perſons* who were to *propagate* the *Doctrine* of *Chriſt* in the world, that they were not *ſuch* who by *reaſon* of their *great repute* and *fame* in the *world*, might eaſily *draw* whole *multitudes* to *embrace* their *dictates*, but (that there *might* not be the leaſt *foundation* for an *implicite faith*) they were of ſo mean *rank* and *condition* in the world, that in all *probability* their *names* had never been heard of, had not their *doctrine* made them *famous*. To this purpoſe *Origen* excellently

C. Celſ. l. 3. ſpeaks, οἶμαι δ' ἐγὼ τὸν Ἰησοῦν διὰ τοῦτο βεβουλῆσθαι διδασκάλοις τοῖς λόγματα χρῆσθαι τοιούτοις, ἵνα μηδεμίαν μὴ ἔχῃ χώραν ὑπόνοια πιθανῶν σοφισμάτων· λαμπρῶς δὲ τοῖς συνιέναι δυναμένοις ἐμφαίνηται, ὅτι τὸ ἄδολον τῆς πραγματείας, τῆς γεγραμμένων, ἐχούσης πολὺ τὸ ἀφελὲς, ὑπερῆρε δυνατοτέρας δυνάμεως, πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἀνυούσης, ὅπερ ἀνύειν δύναιτο δοκεῖ θέσεσι λόγων, καὶ λέξεων σύνθεσις, καὶ μετὰ διαιρέσεων καὶ πτυχολογίας Ἑλληνικῆς ἀκολουθία. *I am of opinion,* ſaith he, *that Jeſus did purpoſely make uſe of ſuch Preachers of his Doctrine, that there might be no place for ſuſpicion that they came inſtructed with the arts of Sophiſtry; but that it be clearly manifeſt to all that would conſider it, that there was nothing of deſign in thoſe who diſcovered*

vered so much simplicity in their writings, and that they had a more divine power which was more efficacious than the greatest volubility of expressions, or ornaments of speech, or the artifices which were used in the Grecian compositions.

3. The *Apostles* delivered their *doctrine with the greatest openness and freedom of spirit*; they did not give out one *thing* to the *world*, and *another* to their *private Disciples*; but with great *freedom* and *boldness* declared their *doctrine* in the most *publick places*, and before their *greatest enemies*. They knew they were *looked* on as *deceivers* by the *world*, but yet they knew themselves to be *true*, ὡς πλάνοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς. This is the 2 Cor. 6. 8. usual *requital good men* have from the *world*, that they are *looked* on as the *greatest deceivers* of it; if it be so with others, they have much less cause to wonder at it, when even *he*, who by one *Prophet* is styled *the desire of Nations*, is by *another* said Hag. 2. 7. *to be despised and rejected of men*; and when *Christ* was in the Isa. 53. 3. *world*, he was called ὁ πλάνος, *the deceiver*; no wonder then Mat. 27. 63. if his *Disciples* were accounted *such*, although they *manifested* their *veracity* by their open *carriage* and *free speaking* to the *faces* of their greatest *adversaries*. The *Apostles* neither feared the *Jews skill* in their *Law*, nor the *wisdom* and *subtilty* of the *Greeks*: Saint *Paul* preacheth *Christ* openly among the *Jews* in their *Synagogues*, and among the *Athenians* he encounters the *Epicureans* and *Stoicks*, and preacheth to them *Jesus* and Act. 17. 18. the *resurrection*. If the *Apostles* had any thing of *deceivers* in *them*, as to the *things* they *related* concerning *Christ*, they would not *certainly* have *spoken* with so much *confidence* concerning *Christ* in the *presence* of *those* who had been his *murtherers*; but *we* see they *appealed* to *themselves*, as to the *miracles* which he had wrought among them, and for his *resurrection* they were ready to lay *down* their *lives* in giving *testimony* to the *truth* of it. That his *body* was gone, was *evident*; that the *Apostles* should take it *away* was *impossible*, considering what a *guard* of *souldiers* they had set *upon* it, and how timorous and fearfull the *Apostles* were, that they fled upon *Christ*'s being *apprehended*. Now what could it be, could make such *fearfull persons* afterwards so *courageous* and *resolute* as they were, had there not been some *more* than *ordinary power* to *convince* and *encourage* them?

4. The

4. The *Apoſtles* deliver their *Teſtimony with the greateſt particularity as to all circumſtances.* They do not *change* or *alter* any of *them* upon *different examinations* before ſeveral *perſons*; they all *agree* in the *greateſt conſtancy* to *themſelves* and *uniformity* with *each other.* As to *matters* of *indifferency*, we find the *Apoſtles* very *yielding* and *condeſcending*; but as to any *thing* which concerned their *teſtimony*, moſt *conſtant* and *reſolved.* Had the *Goſpel* been ſome *cunningly-contrived fancy*, it had been *impoſſible* but ſo many *different perſons*, in ſuch different *places*, and under ſuch *different conditions*, would have *varied* as to ſome material *circumſtance* of it: Or elſe they would have been ſo *wiſe* as to have *delivered* it in *general terms*, without *inſiſting* much on ſuch *particular circumſtances*, which if they had been *falſe*, might have been very eaſily *diſproved*; but with what particular enumeration of *circumſtances* do the *Apoſtles* preach *Chriſt* to the world? *Peter* tells the *Jews* that
Act. 2. 22. it was *Jeſus of* Nazareth *whom he preached*; and leſt they ſhould think it was not the ſame *perſon* who roſe again; with great *boldneſs* and *freedom* of *ſpirit* he ſaith to them, *Therefore let*
2. 36. *all the houſe of* Iſrael *know aſſuredly that God hath made that ſame Jeſus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Chriſt.* Yea that ſame individual *perſon* who was converſant in the *world*, and
5. 31, 32. *died* upon the *Croſs*, *is now become a Prince and Saviour to give repentance to* Iſrael *and remiſſion of ſins.* If there had been any *ground* of *ſuſpicion* as to theſe *things*, who had been ſo *able* to *diſprove* them, or ſo *ready* to do it, as thoſe *perſons* who had *crucified* him? For we cannot *conceive* but *thoſe* who had a *hand* in his *death*, would *endeavour* by all poſſible *means* to *diſprove* his *reſurrection* from the dead. For what a caſe were they like to be in, if thoſe *things* which the *Apoſtles* ſo confidently *preached* were *true?* If *Chriſt had all power now in his hands*, and *there were ſalvation in no other name, but only in his whom they had crucified*, they were like to be in a moſt *deſperate condition*; therefore if any *men* can be ſuppoſed *inquiſitive* after the *truth* of theſe *circumſtances*, no *doubt* theſe were: And if they could have *found* the leaſt *flaw* in their *teſtimony*, the world would ſoon have *ringed* of it; and the *Jews* who were then ſo much *diſperſed* abroad, would have *divulged* it into all *parts*, the *Apoſtles* would have been *told* of it as they preached *Chriſt* in the *Synagogues.* And can we in any reaſon think, but thoſe

Jews

Jews who persecuted *Paul* as he preached in the *Synagogues* of *Asia*, and afterwards *impeached* him so *openly* at *Jerusalem*, would there *enquire* into all the *circumstances* concerning *Christ*, and all the other *Jews* would *write* to their *friends* at *Jerusalem* to be fully *informed* of those *strange things* which were told *them openly* in all *places* in their *Synagogues* by men of their own *Nation* and *Language*, concerning one *Jesus* who was *crucified* and *rose again* from the *dead*. Had there been now any so much as plausible *pretext* that any of these *circumstances* were not *true*, can we think but that a *people* so *unmeasurably given* to their own *ways* and *traditions*, would in all *places* have *vented* any thing that might have *tended* to the *disparagement* of *Christ* and his *Apostles*? But we see *malice* it self could not *find* any *flaw* in the *Apostles testimony*; for if it had, we should *certainly* have *heard* of it, either from the *Jews*, or from the great *opposers* of *Christianity* among the *Heathens*, who pretended to be *curious* and *inquisitive persons*, such as *Celsus*, *Julian*, *Hierocles* and *Porphyrie* were. What *reason* can we have *then* in the *least* to *suspect* such a *Testimony* which passed so *uncontrouled* in that time when it was alone *capable* of being *disproved*, and men's *interest* and *design* would put them so much upon it? The strength of which will appear from the next *proposition*, which is,

No Testimony ought to be taken against a matter of fact thus attested, but from such persons who had greater knowledge of the things attested, and manifest greater fidelity in reporting them. Sect. 17. Prop. 4.

It is easie to make it appear, that supposing any *persons* at that *time* had *contradicted* the *Testimony* of the *Apostles* concerning our *Saviour*, yet there had been no *reason* in the world to have hearkned to their *Testimony* in *opposition* to that of the *Apostles*; and that on these accounts. 1. The *Apostles* witnessed the *Affirmative*, which is more capable of being *attested* than any *Negative* can be. 2. The *Apostles* were more *conversant* with *Christ* than any other *persons* were, because they were *chosen* for that very *end* by him to be *constantly* with him: could any *therefore* be more *capable* of *knowing* the *truth* of all particulars concerning *Christ* than these were? Had there been any *ground* of *suspicion* concerning the *design* of *Christ*, why could not the *Jews* prevail with *Judas* to *discover* it as well as to *betray* his *person*? *Judas* had done but a good *work* if *Christ* had been such

ſuch an *impoſtor* as the *Jews blaſphemouſly* ſaid he was: what made *Judas* then ſo little *ſatisfied* with his *work*, that he grew *weary* of his *life* upon it, and *threw himſelf* away in the moſt *horrid deſpair?* No *perſon* certainly had been ſo *fit* to have been *produced* as a *witneſs* againſt *Chriſt*, as *Judas* who had been ſo *long* with him, and had heard his *ſpeeches* and obſerved his *miracles*; but he had not *patience enough* to ſtay after that *horrid fact* to be a *witneſs* againſt him: nay he was the greateſt *witneſs* at that *time* for *him*, when he who had betrayed him came to the *Sanhedrin* when *conſulting* about his *death*, and
Mat. 27. 5. told them *that he had ſinned in betraying innocent blood.* What poſſible *evidence* could have been given more in behalf of our *Saviour* than that was? When a *perſon* ſo *covetous* as to *betray* his *Maſter* for *thirty pieces* of *ſilver*, was ſo *weary* of his *bargain* that he comes and throws back the *money*, and declares the *perſon innocent* whom he had *betrayed?* And this *perſon* too was ſuch a one as knew our *Saviour* far *better* than any of the *witneſſes* whom afterwards they *ſuborned* againſt him, who yet *contradicted* each other; and at laſt could *produce* nothing which in the *judgment* of the *Heathen Governour* could make him *judge Chriſt* worthy of death. 3. The *Apoſtles* were freer from *deſign* than any *counter-witneſs* at that *time could be*; we have already proved the *Apoſtles* could not poſſibly *have* any other *motive* to *affirm* what they did, but full *conviction* of the *truth* of what they *ſpake*; but now if any among the *Jews* at that time had *aſſerted* any thing *contrary* to the *Apoſtles*, we have a *clear account* of it, and what *motive* might *induce* them to it; *viz.* the *preſerving* of their *honour* and *reputation* with the *people*, the *upholding* their *traditions*, beſides their open and declared *enmity* againſt *Chriſt* without any ſufficient reaſon at all for it; now who would *believe* the *Teſtimony* of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* who had ſo great *authority* among the *people*, which they were *like* to *loſe*, if *Chriſt's doctrine* were *true*, before that of the *Apoſtles* who parted with *all* for the *ſake* of *Chriſt*, and ventured themſelves wholly upon the *truth* of our *Saviour's doctrine?* 4. None ever did ſo much to *atteſt* the *Negative*, as the *Apoſtles* did to prove their *fidelity* as to the *Affirmative.* Had ſufficient *counter-witneſs* been timely *produced*, we cannot *think* the *Apoſtles* would have *run* ſo many *continual hazards* in *Preaching* the *things* which related to the *perſon*

son and *actions* of *Christ*. Did ever any lay down their *lives* to *undeceive* the *world* if the *Apostles* were *guilty* of abusing it? 5. The *number* of such *persons* had been *inconsiderable* in *comparison* of *those* who were so fully *perswaded* of the *truth* of those *things* which *concern* our *Saviour*; who were all *ready* (as most of them did) to *seal* the *truth* of them with their *lives*. Whence should so many men grow so *suddenly confident* of the *truth* of such *things* which were *contrary* to their former *perswasions*, *interest*, *education*, had they not been *delivered* in such a *way*, that they were *assured* of the *undoubted truth* of them? which brings me to the last *proposition*, which is,

Matters of fact being first believed on the account of eye-witnesses, and received with an universal and uncontrouled assent by all such persons who have thought themselves concerned in knowing the truth of them, do yield a sufficient foundation for a firm assent to be built upon. I take it for granted that there is *sufficient foundation* for a *firm assent*, where there can be no *reason* given to *question* the *evidence*; which that there is not in this present *case*, will appear from these following *considerations*. Sect. 18. Prop. 5.

1. *That the multitudes of those persons who did believe these things, had liberty and opportunity to be satisfied of the truth of them before they believed them.* Therefore no *reason* or *motive* can be *assigned*, on which they should be *induced* to *believe* these *things*, but the *undoubted evidence* of *truth* which went along with them. I confess in *Mahumetism* a very great *number* of *persons* have for some *centuries* of *years* continued in the *belief* of the *doctrine* of *Mahomet*; but then withall there is a sufficient *account* to be *given* of that, *viz. the power of the sword* which keeps them in awe, and strictly *forbids* all the *followers* of *Mahomet* to *dispute* their *religion* at all, or *compare* it with any *other*. Therefore I can no more *wonder* at this, *than* I *do* to see so *great* a *part* of the *world* under the *Tyranny* of the *great Turk*: Neither on the other *side* do I *wonder* that such a *multitude* of those *professing Christianity* should together with it, *believe* a great *number* of *erroneous doctrines*, and *live* in the *practice* of many *gross superstitions*, because I consider what a strange *prevalency education* hath upon *softer spirits* and more *easie intellectuals*, and what an *awe* an *Inquisition* bears upon *timorous* and *irresolved persons*. But now when a great *multitude* of *persons sober* and *inquisitive*, shall contrary to the *prin-*

ciples of their *education*, and without *fear* of any humane *force*, (which they before-hand *see* will *persecute* them) and after *diligent enquiry* made into the *grounds* on which they *believe*, *forsake* all their *former perſuaſions*, and reſolvedly *adhere* to the *truth* of the *doctrine propounded* to them, though it coſt them their *lives*; if this give us not *reaſon* to think this *doctrine true*, we muſt believe *mankind* to be the moſt *unhappy creatures* in the *world*; that *will* with ſo much *reſolution part* with all *advantages* of this *life* for the *ſake* of *one* to come, if that be not *undoubtedly certain*, and the *doctrine propoſing* it *infallibly true*. It is an *obſervable circumſtance* in the *propagation* of *Chriſtian Religion*, that though *God* made *choice* at firſt of *perſons* generally of *mean rank* and *condition* in the *world* to be *Preachers* of the *Goſpel*, *God* thereby *making* it *appear* that *our faith did not ſtand in the wiſdom of men, but in the power of God*, and therefore *choſe the weak things of the world to confound the ſtrong*; yet ſoon after the *Goſpel* was preached abroad in the *world*, we find *perſons* of great *place* and *reputation*, of great *parts* and *abilities engaged* in the *profeſſion* of the *Chriſtian Faith*. In the *Hiſtory* of the *Acts* we read of *Sergius* a *Pro-conſul*, of *Dionyſius* the *Areopagite* converted to the *faith*, and in the following *ages* of the *Church* many *perſons* of great *eſteem* for their *excellent learning* and *abilities*; ſuch was *Juſtin Martyr*, one who before he became a *Chriſtian*, was converſant with all *Sects* of *Philoſophers*, *Stoicks*, *Peripateticks*, *Pythagoreans*, and at laſt was a profeſſed *Platoniſt* 'till he was converted from *Plato* to *Chriſt*, and then found that *true* which he ſpeaks of in his *Dialogue* with *Trypho*, that after all his *enquiries* into *Philoſophy*, ſpeaking of the *Doctrine* of *Chriſt* ταύτῃ μόνῃ ἄνευσκον φιλοσοφίας ἀσφαλὲς τι καὶ σύμφορον, *I found this at laſt to be the only ſure and profitable Philoſophy*. And when *Trypho* after *derides* him as a *man* of very *eaſie faith*, who would leave the *doctrine* of *Plato* for that of *Chriſt*, (for it ſeems by him the *Jews* then had a more favourable *opinion* of the *ſtate* of *Platoniſts* than *Chriſtians*) *Juſtin* is ſo far from being *moved* with ſuch *reproaches*, that he tells him he would undertake to *demonſtrate* to him, ὅτι οὐ κενοῖς διηγήσεσιν μύθοις, οὐδὲ ἀναποδείκτοις λόγοις, ἀλλὰ μεστοῖς πνεύματος θείου καὶ δυνάμεως βρύουσι, καὶ πεδηλόσι χάριτος: *that the Chriſtians did not give credit to empty fables, and unprovable aſſertions, but to ſuch a doctrine as was full of a Divine ſpirit and power, and flouriſhed*

1 Cor. 2. 5.
1 Cor. 1. 27.

Dialog. cum Typh. p. 125. ed. Par.

flourished with grace: The proving of which is the subject of that *discourse.* At *Alexandria* we meet with a *succession* of *excellent persons*, all which were not only *embracers* themselves, but *defenders* of the *Christian faith*; for setting aside there *Abilius, Justus, Cerdo, Eumenes, Marcus, Celadion, Agrippinus, Julianus, Demetrius*, and *others* who *flourished* about the second *Century*, I shall only *fix* on those *persons*, who were *famous enquirers* after *truth*, and noted for *excellency* in *Heathen learning*; yet these *persons* after all their *enquiries* found nothing to *fix* on but the *Christian faith*, and valued no other *discovery* of *truth* in *comparison* with that. Such was *Pantænus*, who as *Eusebius* tells us, was an *excellent Stoick* before he became a *Christian*, and was after so *eminent* a one, that in *imitation* of the *Apostles* he went into *India* to convert the *inhabitants* to the *Christian faith*, and at his return was made *Rector* of the *School* at *Alexandria*; which as the same *Author* tells us, was much *frequented* by such who were ἐν λόγῳ καὶ τῇ περὶ τὰ θεῖα ζητήσει δυνατοί, *well skill'd in Humane as well as Divine learning.* How excellent *Pantænus* was in *Humane learning*, may *appear* in that *Origen* and *Hierome* both make his *example* their *plea* for the *studying* of it, After him succeeded *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Pantænus* his *Scholar*, a person of *great depth* of *learning* and *exquisitely skill'd* in all *Heathen Antiquities*, as appears by his *remaining writings.* The *Learning* of *Origen* is sufficiently known, which was in such great *reputation* in his own *time*, that not only *Christians* but *Philosophers* flocked to his *Lectures* at *Alexandria* as *Eusebius* tells us, wherein he *read* the *Mathematicks*, and other *parts* of *Philosophy* as well as the *Scriptures*; and the same *Author* informs us that the *Philosophers* did *dedicate* their *books* to him, and sometimes *chose* him as *arbitrator* between them in *matters of dispute*; and *Porphyrie* himself in his *books* against the *Christians vouchsafed* a high *encomium* of *Origen* for his *excellent learning.* In *Origen's* time *Heraclas* a *Presbyter* of *Alexandria* for five *years* together *frequented* the *Schools* of the *Philosophers*, and put on the *Philosophick pallium*, βιβλία τε ἑλλήνων καὶ ἐν μάλιστα φιλολόγων, *and was very conversant in the books of the Grecian Learning.* Besides these we read of *Pierius* and *Achillas* two *Presbyters* of *Alexandria* who were τῇ καθ' ἑλλήνας παιδείᾳ καὶ φιλοσοφίᾳ διαπρεπεῖς, as *Nicephorus Callistus* speaks, *persons well skilled in* the

Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 10.

Euseb. l. 6. c. 20.

Hist. l. 6. c. 18.

Euseb. l. 6. c. 20.

Hist. Eccles. l. 6. c. 35.

the Grecian Learning and Philoſophy. If from *Alexandria* we go to *Cæſarea*, there we not only meet with a *School* of *learning* among the *Chriſtians*, but with *perſons* very *eminent* in all *kinds* of *learning*; ſuch were the famous *Pamphilus* and *Euſebius* ſo great an *admirer* of *him*, that ever ſince he is called *Euſebius Pamphili*. At *Antioch was Dorotheus* ἀνὴρ παντοίων λόγων καὶ παιδείας ἐλευθερίου, as *Nicephorus* ſpeaks, *a perſon verſed in all kind of ingenuous literature.* *Anatolius Biſhop* of *Laodicea*, one verſed in *Geometry*, *Aſtronomy*, and all *kind* of *Philoſophy* as *well as in the doctrine of Chriſt.* Thus we ſee how in thoſe early days of the *Greek Church* what *excellent perſons* many of *thoſe* were who were *zealous Profeſſors* of *Chriſtianity*; and concerning thoſe of the *Latin Church*, I ſhall only mention that *ſpeech* of St. *Auſtin* who was himſelf an *inſtance* of the ſame *nature* and a *ſtar* of the *firſt magnitude* among them. *Nonne aſpicimus quanto auro & argento & veſte ſuffarcinatus exierit de Ægypto Cyprianus Doctor ſuaviſſimus & Martyr beatiſſimus? quanto Lactantius? quanto Victorinus, Optatus, Hilarius? ut de vivis taceam: quanto innumerabiles Græci? quod prior ipſe fideliſſimus Dei ſervus Moſes fecerat, de quo ſcriptum eſt, quod eruditus fuerit omni ſapientia Ægyptiorum.* To whoſe *catalogue* of learned perſons, among the *Latin Chriſtians Tertullian*, *Arnobius* and ſeveral others may be deſervedly added. But as St. *Auſtin* there well obſerves, *though the Iſraelites went rich out of* Ægypt, *yet it was their eating the Paſſover which ſaved them from deſtruction*; ſo though *theſe* were *accompliſhed* with thoſe *perfections* and *riches* of the *ſoul*, the *ornaments* of *learning*, yet it was their *eating* the *true Paſſover which was Chriſt*, by their *adhering* to his *doctrine*, was *that* which would be of more *advantage* to *them*, than all their *accompliſhments* would be. Now then ſince in the *firſt ages* of the *Chriſtian Church*, we find not only *innumerable multitudes* of *perſons* of great *integrity* and *ſobriety* in their *lives* embracing the *doctrine* of *Chriſt*, but ſo many *perſons* that were curious *enquirers* after the *truth* of *things*, we can certainly have no *reaſon* to *diſtruſt* ſuch a *Teſtimony* which was *received* in ſo *unanimous* a *manner* by *perſons* as able to *judge* of the *truth* of *things*, and as *fearfull* of being *deceived* in *reference* to *them* as any now in the *world* can be.

Lib. 6. c. 35.

Lib. 6. c. 36.

Aug. de doctr. Chriſtiana, l. 2. cap. 40.

2. As

Sect. 19.

2. As this *Testimony* was received by *persons inquisitive* after the *truth* of *things*, so *the doctrine conveyed by it was a matter of the highest moment in the world*: and therefore we cannot conceive but *persons ordinarily inquisitive* about other *things* would be more than *ordinarily so* about this, because their *eternal welfare* and *happiness* did depend upon it. All *persons* that are truly *religious*, must at least be *allowed* to be *persons* very *inquisitive* after the *state* and *condition* of their *souls* when they shall be *dislodged* from their *bodies*. And if we do but grant *this*, can we in any *reason* think that such a *multitude* of *persons* in so many *ages* should continue *venturing* their *souls* upon a *Testimony* which they had no *assurance* of the *truth* of? And that *none* of all these *persons*, though men otherwise *rational* and *judicious*, should be *able* to *discover* the *falsity* of that *doctrine* they went upon, if at *least* any upon *consideration* of it can *imagine* it to be so? It is not *reconcilable* with the general *presumption* of *Humane nature* concerning *Divine providence* and the *care God* takes of the *welfare* of *men*, to suffer so many *persons* who *sincerely desire* to *serve God* in the *way* which is most *pleasing* to *him*, to *go on* in such a *continual delusion*, and never have it at all *discovered* to them. If all then who have *believed* the *doctrine* of *Christ* to be the only way to *salvation* have been *deceived*, either we must *deny* altogether a *Divine Providence*, or say the *Devil* hath *more* power to *deceive* men than *God* to *direct* them, which is *worse* than the *former*; or else *assert* that there are no such *things* at all as either *God* or *Devils*, but that all *things* come to *pass* by *chance* and *fortune*; and if so, it is still more *inexplicable* why such *multitudes* of *rational* and *serious* men, and the most *inquisitive part* of the *world* as to such *things* should all be so *possessed* with the *truth* and *certainty* of these things: and the more *profane*, *wicked* and *ignorant* any *persons* are, the more prone they are to *mock* and *deride* them. If such *men* then see more into *truth* and *reason* than the *sober* and *judicious part* of *mankind*, let us bid *adieu* to *humanity* and *adore* the *brutes*, since we *admire* their *judgment* most who come the *nearest* to them.

3. *The multitude of these persons thus consenting in this Testimony, could have no other engagements to this consent, but only their firm persuasion of the truth of the doctrine conveyed by it*; because those who unanimously *agree* in this *thing* are such *persons*

ſons whoſe other *deſigns* and *intereſts* in this world, differ as *much* as any *men's* do. If it had been only a *conſent* of *Jews*, there might have been ſome *probable pretence* to have *ſuſpected* a *matter* of *intereſt* in it; but as to this *thing*, we find the *Jews* divided among *themſelves* about it; and the ſtiffeſt *deniers* of the *truth* of it, do yet *inviolably* preſerve thoſe *ſacred records* among them, from which the *truth* of the *doctrine* of *Chriſt* may be undoubtedly proved. Had the *Chriſtian Religion* been *enforced* upon the *world* by the *Roman Emperors* at the *time* of its firſt *promulgation*, there would have *been* ſome *ſuſpicion* of *particular deſign* in it; but it came with no other *ſtrength* but the *evidence* of its own *truth*; yet it found *ſuddain* and *ſtrange entertainment* among *perſons* of all *nations* and *degrees* of *men*. In a ſhort *time* it had *eaten* into the *heart* of the *Roman Empire*, and made ſo large a *ſpread* therein, that it made *Tertullian* ſay, *Heſterni ſumus, & veſtra omnia implevimus, urbes, inſulas, caſtella, municipia, conciliabula, caſtra ipſa, tribus, decurias, palatium, ſenatum, forum; ſola vobis relinquimus Templa. We have but newly appeared*, ſaith he, *and yet we have filled all places with our company, but only your Temples*; and before ſpeaking of the *Heathens*, *Obſeſſam vociferantur civitatem, in agris, in Caſtellis, in inſulis Chriſtianos, omnem ſexum, ætatem, conditionem, etiam dignitatem tranſgredi ad hoc nomen quaſi detrimento mœrent. All ſorts and conditions of men in all places, were ſuddenly become Chriſtians.* What common tye could there be now to *unite* all theſe *perſons* together, if we ſet aſide the *undoubted truth* and *certainty* of the *doctrine* of *Chriſt* which was firſt *preached* to them by ſuch who were *eye-witneſſes* of *Chriſt's actions*, and had left *ſacred records* behind them, containing the *ſubſtance* of the *doctrine* of *Chriſt* and thoſe *admirable inſtructions* which were their only certain *guides* in the *way* to *Heaven?*

Apolog. cap. 36.

Apol. c. 1.

4. *Becauſe many perſons do joyn in this conſent with true Chriſtians, who yet could heartily wiſh that the doctrine of Chriſtianity were not true.* Such are all thoſe *perſons* who are *ſenſual* in their *lives*, and *walk* not *according* to the *rules* of the *Goſpel*, yet dare not *queſtion* or *deny* the *truth* of it. Such who could *heartily wiſh* there were no *future ſtate*, nor *judgment to come*, that they might *indulge themſelves* in this *world* without *fear* of *another*; yet their *conſciences* are ſo far *convinced* of, and awed

awed by the *truth* of these *things*, that they *raise* many *perplexities* and *anxieties* in their *minds* which they would most willingly be *rid* of; which they can never *throughly* be, till instead of *having* the *name* of *Christians*, they come to *live* the *life* of *Christians*, and become *experimentally* acquainted with the *truth* and *power* of *Religion*. And withall we find that the more men have been *acquainted* with the *practice* of *Christianity*, the greater *evidence* they have had of the *truth* of it, and been more *fully* and *rationally* perswaded of it. To such I grant there are such *powerfull evidences* of the *truth* of the *doctrine* of *Christ* by the *effectual workings* of the *Spirit* of *God* upon their *souls*, that all other *arguments*, as to their own *satisfaction*, may fall *short* of these. As to which, those *verses* of the *Poet Dantes*, rendred into *Latin* by *F. S.* are very *pertinent* and *significant*; for when he had *introduced* the *Apostle Peter*, asking him what it was which his *faith* was *founded* on, he answers,

Deinde exivit ex luce profunda
Quæ illic splendebat pretiosa gemma
Super quam omnis virtus fundatur.

i. e. *That God was pleased by immediate revelation of himself, to discover that divine truth to the world whereon our faith doth stand as on its sure foundation*; but when the *Apostle* goes on to *enquire* how he *knew* this came at *first* from *God*, his answer to that is,

——— *larga pluvia*
Spiritus Sancti, quæ est diffusa
Super veteres & super novas membranas,
Est syllogismus ille qui eam mihi concluſit
Adeo acutè, ut præ illa demonstratione
Omnis demonstratio alia mihi videatur obtusa.

i. e. *That the Spirit of God doth so fully discover it self both in the Old and New Testament, that all other arguments are but dull and heavy if compared with this.* It is true they are so to a truly *inlightned conscience* which *discovers* so much *beauty* and *glory* in the *Scriptures*, that they *ravish* the *soul*, although it be

unable

unable to give ſo full an *account* of *this* unto *others* who want the *eyes* to *ſee* that *beauty* with, which a *heart* truly *gracious* hath. We *ſee* ordinarily in the *world*, that the *attraction* of *beauty* is an *unaccountable* thing; and *one* may diſcern *that* which *raviſheth* him, which another *looks* on as *mean* and *ordinary*; and why may it not *be* much more *thus* in *divine objects* which want *ſpiritual eyes* to *diſcover* them? Therefore I grant that *good men* enjoy that *ſatisfaction* to their own *Conſciences*, as to the *truth* of the *Doctrine* of *Chriſt*, which others cannot attain to; but yet I ſay, that *ſuch* do *likewiſe ſee* the moſt *ſtrong*, *rational* and *convincing evidence* which doth *induce* them to *believe*; which *evidence* is then moſt *convincing*, when it is *ſeconded* by the *peculiar energy* of the *Spirit* of *God* upon the *ſouls* of true *Believers*. But yet we ſee that the *power* and *force* of the *truth* of theſe *things* may be ſo *great*, even upon ſuch *minds* which are not yet *moulded* into the *faſhion* of *true goodneſs*, that it may *awe* with its *light* and *clearneſs*, where it doth not *ſoften* and *alter* by its *heat* and *influence*. Now whence can it be that ſuch *convictions* ſhould *ſtick* ſo *faſt* in the *minds* of *thoſe* who would *fain* pull out thoſe *piercing arrows*, but that there is a greater *power* in *them* than they are *maſters* of, and they cannot *ſtand* againſt the *force* whereby they *come* upon *them*; nor find any *ſalve* to *cure* the *wounds* which are *made* within them, but by thoſe *weapons* which were the *cauſes* of them? And therefore when *wicked perſons* under *conflicts* of *conſcience*, cannot *eaſe themſelves* by direct *Atheiſm*, or finding *reaſon* to *caſt* off ſuch *convictions* by *diſcerning* any *invalidity* in the *Teſtimony* whereon the *truth* of theſe *things depends*, it is a certain *argument* that there is abundant *truth* in that *Teſtimony*, when men would fain *perſuade themſelves* to *believe* the *contrary*, and yet *cannot*.

5. The *truth* of this *conſent* appears, *from the unanimity of it among thoſe perſons who have yet ſtrangely differed from each other in many controverſies in Religion.* We ſee thereby this *unanimity* is no *forced* or *deſigned* thing, becauſe we *ſee* the *perſons agreeing* in *this*, do very much *diſagree* from *each other* in other *things*. And the ſame *grounds* and *reaſons* whereon they *diſagree* as to other *things*, would have *held* as to theſe too, were there not *greater evidence* of the *certainty* of theſe *things* than of *thoſe* they fall out about. It hath not yet become a

queſtion

question among *those* who differ so much about the *sence* of *Scripture*, *whether the Scripture its self be the Word of God*, although the very *accounts* on which we are to *believe* it to be so, hath been the *subject* of no *mean Controversies*. All the *divided parts* of the *Christian world* do yet fully *agree* in the *matters* of *fact*, viz. *that there was such a person as Jesus Christ, and that he did many great miracles, that he died on the Cross at* Jerusalem, *and rose again from the dead*; now these contain the great *foundations* of *Christian faith*, and therefore the *multitude* of *other controversies* in the *world* ought to be so *far* from *weakning* our *faith*, as to the *truth* of the *doctrine* of *Christ* (which men of *weak judgments* and *Atheistical spirits* pretend) that it ought to be a *strong confirmation* of it, when we see *persons* which so *peevishly quarrel* with each other about some *inferiour* and less *weighty parts* of *Religion*, do yet *unanimously* consent in the *principal foundations* of *Christian faith*, and such whereon the *necessity* of *faith* and *obedience*, as the *way* to salvation, doth more *immediately depend*. And this may be *one* great *reason* why the infinitely *wise God* may suffer such lamentable *contentions* and *divisions* to be in the *Christian world*, that thereby *inquisitive persons* may *see* that if *Religion* had been a mere *design* of *some* few *politick persons*, the *quarrelsome world* (where it is not held in by *force*) would never have *consented* so long in the *owning* such *common principles* which all the other *Controversies* are built upon. And although it be continually *seen* that in divided *parties*, *one* is apt to *run* from any *thing* which is *received* by the *other*, and *men* generally *think* they can never *run* far *enough* from *them* whose *errours* they have *discovered*, that yet this *principle* hath not *carried* any considerable *party* of the *Christian world* (out of their indignation against those great corruptions which have crept into the world under a pretence of Religion) to the *disowning* the *foundation* of *Christian faith*, must be *partly imputed* to the *signal* hand of *Divine providence*, and *partly* to those strong *evidences* which there are of the *truth* of that *Testimony* which *conveys* to us the *foundations* of *Christian faith*. Thus we see now, how *great* and *uncontrouled* this *consent* is, as to the *matters* of *fact delivered* down from the *eye-witnesses* of them, concerning the *actions* and *miracles* of our *blessed Saviour*, (which are contained in the *Scriptures* as *authentical records* of

them,) and what a ſure *foundation* there is for a *firm aſſent* to the *truth* of the *things* from ſo *univerſal* and *uninterrupted* a *tradition.*

Sect. 20. Thus far we have now manifeſted the *neceſſity* of the *miracles* of *Chriſt*, in order to the *propagation* of *Chriſtianity* in the world, from the conſideration of the *perſons* who were to *propagate* it in the world; the *next thing* we are to conſider, is, *the admirable ſucceſs which the Goſpel met with in the world upon its being preached to it:* Of which no rational *account* can be given, unleſs the *actions* and *miracles* of our *Saviour* were moſt undoubtedly *true.* That the *Goſpel* of *Chriſt* had very ſtrange and wonderfull *ſucceſs* upon its firſt preaching, hath been partly diſcovered already, and is withall ſo plain from the long *continuance* of it in theſe *European* parts, that none any ways converſant in the hiſtory of former *ages*, can have any ground to queſtion it. But that this *ſtrange* and *admirable ſucceſs* of the *doctrine* of *Chriſt* ſhould be an evidence of the *Truth* of it, and the *miracles* wrought in confirmation of it, will appear from theſe two conſiderations. 1. *That the doctrine its ſelf was ſo directly contrary to the general inclinations of the world.* 2. *That the propagation of it was ſo much oppoſed by all worldly power.*

1. *That the doctrine its ſelf was ſo oppoſite to the general inclinations of the world.* The *doctrine* may be conſidered either as to its *credenda*, or *matters of faith*, or as to its *agenda*, or *matters of life and practice*; both theſe were contrary to the *inclinations* of the world; the former ſeemed *hard* and *incredible*, the latter *harſh* and *impoſſible.*

1. The *matters of faith* which were to be believed by the world, were not ſuch *things* which we may imagine the vulgar *ſort* of men would be very *forward* to run after, nor very greedy to imbrace. 1. *Becauſe contrary to the principles of their education, and the Religion they were brought up in*; the generality of mankind is very *tenacious* of thoſe *principles* and *prejudices* which are ſucked in in the time of *Infancy.* There are ſome *Religions* one would think it were *impoſſible* that any *rational* men ſhould believe them; but only on this *account*, becauſe they are *bred* up under them. It is a very great *advantage* any *Religion* hath againſt another, that it comes to ſpeak *firſt*, and thereby *inſinuates* ſuch an *apprehenſion* of its ſelf to the

the *mind*, that it is very hard *removing* it afterwards. The *underſtanding* ſeems to be of the *nature* of thoſe *things* which are *communis juris*, and therefore *primi ſunt poſſidentis*; when an *opinion* hath once got *poſſeſſion* of the *mind*, it uſually keeps out what-ever comes to *diſturb* it. Now we cannot otherwiſe conceive but all thoſe *perſons* who had been bred up under *Paganiſm* and the moſt groſs *Idolatry*, muſt needs have a very *potent prejudice* againſt ſuch a *doctrine* which was wholly *irreconcilable* with that *Religion* which they had been devoted to. Now the *ſtronger* the *prejudice* is which is conveyed into men's *minds* by the *force* of *education*, the greater *ſtrength* and *power* muſt there needs be in the *Goſpel* of *Chriſt*, which did ſo eaſily demoliſh theſe *ſtrong holds*, and *captivate* the *underſtandings* of men to the *obedience* of *Chriſt*. To which purpoſe *Arnobius* excellently ſpeaks in theſe words to the *Heathens*; *Sed non creditis geſta hæc. Sed qui ea conſpicati ſunt fieri & ſub oculis ſuis viderunt agi, teſtes optimi certiſſimique auctores, & credide-runt hæc ipſi, & credenda poſteris nobis haud exilibus cum approbationibus tradiderunt. Quinam iſti fortaſſe quæritis? gentes, populi, nationes & incredulum illud genus humanum. Quod niſi aperta res eſſet, & luce ipſa quemadmodum dicitur clarior, nunquam rebus hujuſmodi credulitatis ſuæ commodarent aſſenſum. An nunquid dicemus illius temporis homines uſque adeo fuiſſe vanos, mendaces, ſtolidos, brutos, ut quæ nunquam viderant vidiſſe ſe fingerent? & quæ facta omninò non erant falſis proderent teſtimoniis aut puerili aſſertione firmarent? Cumque poſſent vobiſcum & unanimiter vivere, & inoffenſas ducere conjunctiones, gratuita ſuſciperent odia & execrabili haberentur in nomine? Quod ſi falſa ut dicitis hiſtoria illa rerum eſt, unde tam brevi tempore totus mundus iſta religione completus eſt? Aut in unam coire qui potuerunt mentem gentes regionibus diſſitæ, ventis cœlique convexionibus dimotæ? Aſſeverationibus illectæ ſunt nudis, inductæ in ſpes caſſas, & in pericula capitis immittere ſe ſponte temeraria deſperatione voluerunt, cum nihil tale vidiſſent quod eas in hos cultus novitatis ſuæ poſſit excitare miraculo. Imo quia hæc omnia ab ipſo cernebant geri & ab ejus præconibus qui per orbem totum miſſi beneficia patris & munera ſanandis animis hominibuſque portabant, veritatis ipſius vi victæ, & dederunt ſe Deo, nec in magnis poſuere diſpendiis membra vobis projicere, & viſcera ſua lanianda præbere.* The ſubſtance of whoſe diſcourſe is, that it is *impoſſible* *Arnob. contra gentes l. 1.*

possible to *suppose* so many *persons* of so many *Nations* to be so far *besotted* and *infatuated*, as not only to *believe* a *Religion* to be *true* which was *contrary* to that they were *educated* in, but to *venture* their *lives* as well as *estates* upon it, had it not been *discovered* to them in a most *certain* and *infallible way* by such who had been *eye-witnesses* of the *actions* and *miracles* of *Christ* and his *Apostles*. And as he elsewhere speaks, *Vel hæc saltem fidem vobis faciant argumenta credendi quod jam per omnes terras in tam brevi tempore & parvo immensi nominis hujus sacramenta diffusa sunt; quod nulla jam natio est tam barbari moris, & mansuetudinem nesciens, quæ non ejus amore versa molliverit asperitatem suam, & in placidos sensus assumpta tranquillitate migraverit; quod tam magnis ingeniis præditi Oratores, Grammatici, Rhetores, Consulti juris ac Medici, Philosophiæ etiam secreta rimantes, magisteria hæc expetunt, spretis quibus paulo ante fidebant, &c.* Will not this persuade the *world* what firm *foundations* the *faith* of *Christians* stands on, when in so short a *time* it is spread over all *parts* of the *world?* that by it the most *inhumane* and *barbarous Nations* are *softned* into more than *civility?* That men of the *greatest wits* and *parts*, *Orators*, *Grammarians*, *Rhetoricians*, *Lawyers*, *Physicians*, *Philosophers*, who not? have *forsaken* their former *sentiments*, and *adhered* to the *doctrine* of *Christ*. Now, I say, if the *power* of *education* be so *strong* upon the *minds* of *men* to *persuade* them of the *truth* of the *Religion* they are bred up under, (which *Atheistically* disposed *persons* make so much *advantage* of,) this is so far from *weakning* the *truth* of *Christianity*, that it proves a great *confirmation* of *it*, because it obtained so *much* upon its first *Preaching* in the *world*, notwithstanding the *highest prejudices* from *education* were against it. If then men be so *prone* to *believe* that to be most *true*, which they have been *educated* under, it must argue a more than ordinary *evidence* and *power* in that *Religion* which *unsettles* so much the *principles* of *education*, as to make *men* not only *question* the *truth* of them, but to *renounce* them, and embrace a Religion contrary to them.

C *gentes lib.* 2. *p.* 44.

Sect. 21. Especially when we withall consider what *strong holds* these *principles* of *education* were *backed* with among the *Heathens*, when the *doctrine* of *Christ* was first *divulged* among them, *i. e.* what plausible *pretences* they had of continuing in the *Religion* which they were brought up in, and why they should not *exchange* it for *Christianity*; and those were, 1. *The*

1. *The pretended antiquity of their religion above the Christian*; the main thing pleaded against the *Christians* was *dvortium ab institutis majorum*, that they thought themselves wiser than their *fore-fathers*; and *Symmachus*, *Lybanius*, and others, plead this most in behalf of *Paganism*; *servanda est tot sæculis fides, & sequendi sunt nobis parentes qui secuti sunt feliciter suos*; their *religion* pleaded *prescription* against any other, and they were resolved to follow the *steps* of their *Ancestors* wherein they thought themselves *happy* and *secure*. *Cæcilius* in *Minutius Felix* first argues much against *dogmatizing* in *religion*, but withall says it most becomes a *lover* of *truth*, *Majorum excipere disciplinam, religiones traditas colere, deos quos à parentibus ante imbutus es timere; nec de numinibus ferre sententiam, sed prioribus credere.* So *Arnobius* tells us the main *thing* objected against the *Christians* was *novellam esse religionem nostram, & ante dies natam propemodum paucos, neque vos potuisse antequam & patriam linquere, & in barbaros ritus peregrinosque traduci.* And *Cotta* in *Tully* long before, laid this down as the *main principle* of *Pagan religion*, *majoribus nostris etiam nulla ratione reddita credere, to believe the tradition of our Fathers, although there be no evidence in reason for it*: And after he had discovered the *vanity* of the *Stoical arguments* about *Religion*, concludes with this as the only *thing* he resolved his *Religion* into, *Mihi unum satis erit, majores nostros ita tradidisse, It is enough for me that it comes by tradition from our fore-fathers.* *Lactantius* fully sets forth the *manner* of *pleading* used by the *Heathens* against the *Christians* in the point of *antiquity*. *Hæ sunt religiones, quas sibi à majoribus suis traditas, pertinacissime tueri ac defendere perseverant; nec considerant quales sint, sed ex hoc probatas atque veras esse confidunt, quod eas veteres tradiderunt; tantaque est auctoritas vetustatis, ut inquirere in eam scelus esse dicatur.* The *English* is, They accounted *tradition infallible*, and knew no other way whereby to *find* the *truth* of *Religion* but by its *conveyance* from their *fore-fathers*. How like herein do they *speak* to those who contend for the *corruptions* crept into the *Christian Church?* who make *use* of the same *pretences* for them, *viz.* that they were delivered *down* from the *Fathers*; *tantaque est auctoritas vetustatis, ut inquirere in eam scelus esse dicatur*; *who are we who will see further than Antiquity?* But it is no wonder if *Antiquity* be accompanied with *dimness* of.

Tertul. ad Nat. l. 1. cap. 10. *Symmach. ep. l. 10. ep. 61.* *Lyban. orat. de Templis.* *Minut. Felix. p. 6.* *Arnob. c. gent. l. 2. pag. 90.* *De nat. Deorum. l. 3.* *Lactant. de orig. error. l. 2. c. 6.*

of *ſight*; and ſo it was undoubtedly as to the *Pagan world*; and as to the *Chriſtian* too, when ſuch a *mixture* of *Heatheniſm* came into it. And the very ſame *arguments* by which the *pleaders* for *Chriſtianity* did *juſtifie* the *truth* of their *Religion*, notwithſtanding this pretended *antiquity*, will with equal *force* hold for a *reformation* of ſuch *inveterate abuſes*, which under a pretence of *Antiquity*, have *crept* into the *Chriſtian Church*.

Ambroſ. ep. 6. Symmach. *Nullus pudor eſt ad meliora tranſire*, ſaith *Ambroſe* in his anſwer to *Symmachus*, *what ſhame is it to grow better? Quid facies?* ſaith *Lactantius*, *majoreſne potius an rationem ſequeris? Si rationem mavis, diſcedere te neceſſe eſt ab inſtitutis & auctoritate majorum: quoniam id ſolum rectum eſt, quod ratio præſcribit. Sin autem pietas majores ſequi ſuadet: fateris igitur & ſtultos illos eſſe qui excogitatis contra rationem religionibus ſervierint; & te ineptum qui id colas quod falſum eſſe convicerís.* Where *reaſon* and mere *authority* of *fore-fathers* ſtand in *competition*, he is more a *child* than a *man* that knows not on which ſide to give his *ſuffrage*. But with the greateſt *ſtrength*, and *cleareſt reaſon* *Arnobius* ſpeaks in this caſe. *Itaque cum nobis intenditis averſionem à religione priorum, cauſam convenit ut inſpiciatis, non factum, nec quid reliquerimus opponere, ſed ſecuti quid ſimus potiſſimum contueri. When you charge us*, ſaith he, *that we are revolted from the religion of our fore-fathers, you ought not preſently to condemn the fact, but to examine the reaſons of it; neither ought you ſo much to look at what we have left, as what it is we have embraced. Nam ſi mutare ſententiam culpa eſt ulla vel crimen, & à veteribus inſtitutis in alias res novas voluntateſque migrare, criminatio iſta & vos ſpectat, qui toties vitam conſuetudinemque mutâſtis; qui in mores alios, atque alios ritus priorum condemnatione tranſiſtis.* If mere *departing* from the *Religion* of our *anceſtors* be the great *fault*, all thoſe who own themſelves to be *Chriſtians*, were *themſelves guilty* of it when they *revolted* from *Heatheniſm*. If it be here ſaid that the *caſe* is different, becauſe there was ſufficient *reaſon* for it, which there is not as to the *corruptions* of the *Chriſtian Church*; if ſo, then all the *diſpute* is taken off from the *matter* of *fact*, or the *revolt* to the *cauſes* inducing to it; and if the *Proteſtant* be not able as to the *cauſes* of our *ſeparation* from *Rome* to *manifeſt* that they were *ſufficient*, let him then be *triumphed* over by the *Romaniſt*, and not before. I aſſert then, and that with

De orig. error. l. 2. c. 6.

C. gent. l. 2.

with much assurance of mind, that the *principles* of the *Reformation* are *justifiable* upon the same *grounds* of *reason*, which the *embracing Christianity* was, when men of *Heathens* became *Christians*; and that the *arguments* made use of by the *Romanists* against our *separation* from them, are such as would have *justified* a *Pagan Philosopher* in not embracing *Christianity*. For if it be *unlawfull* for any *party* of *men*, to *divide* from *others* in a *matter* of *Religion* which pretends *antiquity* and *universality*, it had been *unlawfull* for a *Philosopher* to have deserted *Paganism*, as well as for a *Protestant* to depart from *Rome*. For according to the *principles* of the *Romanists*, the *judgment* in the *cause* of the *separation*, and of the *truth* of *Religion* lies in that *party* from which we *depart*; if we do now but *apply* this to the old *Roman Senate* or *Emperors* in the *case* of *Christian Religion* and *dividing* from *Heathen Worship*, we shall quickly see how easie a *matter* it will be to make *Christianity* it self a *Schism*, and the *doctrine* of *Christ* the *greatest heresie*. But as *strong* as those *pretences* were then, or have been *since*, the *power* of the *doctrine* of *Christ* hath been so *great*, as to *conquer* them, and thereby to *manifest*, that it was of *God*, when such potent *prejudices* were not able to *withstand* it. Of which *Antiquity* is the first.

2. *The large and universal spread of Pagan Religion*, when Christianity came into the world; there was never so great *Catholicism*, as in *Heathen Worship*, when the Apostles first appeared in the *Gentile* world. *Inde adeo per universa imperia, provincias, oppida, videmus singulos sacrorum ritus gentiles habere, & Deos colere municipes*, saith *Cæcilius* in *Minutius Felix*. The great charge against the *Christians* was *Novellism*, that they brought in a *strange* and *unheard-of Religion*. The common *Question* was, *Where was your Religion before Jesus of* Nazareth? as it hath been since, *Where was your Religion before* Luther? and the same *answer* which *served* then, will stand *unmovable* now, *there where no other Religion is, in the Word of God*. For this was the *weapon* whereby the *Primitive Christians* defended themselves against the *assaults* of *Paganism*, and the *evidences* they brought that the *doctrine* preached by them, and contained in the *Scriptures*, was *originally* from *God*, were the only *means* of *over-throwing Paganism*, notwithstanding its *pretended universality*.

Minut. in Octavio, p. 6.

3. *Settle-*

3. *Settlement by Laws of Heathen Worſhip.* This was ſo much *pretended* and *pleaded* for, that as far as we can find, by the *Hiſtory* of the *Primitive Church*, the *pretence* on which the *Chriſtians* ſuffered, was *ſedition*, and *oppoſing* the *eſtabliſhed Laws*. The *Chriſtians* were reckoned *inter illicitas factiones*, as appears by *Tertullian*, among *unlawfull Corporations*; the *Politicians* and *States-men* were all for preſerving the *Laws*; they troubled not themſelves much about any *Religion*, but only *that* which was ſettled by *Law*, they ſought to *uphold*, becauſe the *acting* contrary to it might bring ſome *diſturbance* to the civil *State*. There were ſeveral *Laws* which the *Chriſtians* were then brought under, and condemned for the breach of. 1. *The Law againſt Hæteriæ*, or *Conventicles*, as they were pleaſed frequently to ſtyle the *meeting* of *Chriſtians* together; thence the *places* where the *Chriſtians* aſſembled for *worſhip*, were commonly called *Conventicula*; *Ita appellabant loca*, ſaith *Heraldus*, *ubi congregabantur Chriſtiani oraturi, & verbi divini interpretationem accepturi, ac ſacras Synaxes habituri*: but *Elmenhorſtius* more ſhortly; *Conventicula loca ſunt ubi Chriſtiani congregati orare conſueverunt. The places where the Chriſtians did meet and pray together, were called Conventicles*: in *Baſilica Sicinnini ubi ritus Chriſtiani eſt conventiculum*, ſaith *Ammianus Marcellinus*; *cur immaniter conventicula dirui?* ſaith *Arnobius*; *qui univerſum populum cum ipſo pariter conventiculo concremavit*, as *Lactantius* likewiſe ſpeaks. Now the reaſon of the name was, becauſe the *Heathens* judged theſe *aſſemblies* of Chriſtians to be *Illegal Societies*. For which we are to underſtand; that in the time of the *Roman Emperours*, when they grew *ſuſpicious* of their own *ſafety*, they ſeverely prohibited all thoſe *Sodalitia*, or *Societies* and *Colledges*, which were very much in *uſe* in the *Roman Common-wealth*, in imitation of the ἑταιρίαι in the Cities of *Greece*. Theſe were ſuch *ſocieties* of perſons, which voluntarily *confederated* together either for ſome particular *deſign*, or for preſerving *Love* and *Friendſhip* among each other, and thence had their frequent *meetings* in *common* together. Now the more *numerous* theſe were, and the more *cloſely* they *confederated*, the more *jealous eye* the *Roman Emperours* had upon them, becauſe of ſome *clandeſtine deſigns*, which they ſuſpected might be carried on for diſturbance of the publick *Peace* in ſuch *ſuſpicious meetings*. Thence came

Apol. c. 38.

Obſervat. in Arnob. l. 4.

Hiſtor. l. 27. *Arnob. l.* 4. *Lactant. l.* 5. *c.* 11.

came out many particular *Edicts* of the *Emperours* against all such *kinds* of *societies*.

Now when the *Christians* began to be somewhat *numerous*, and had according to the principles of their *Religion* frequent *Assemblies* for *Divine worship*, and did *confederate* together by such *Symbols*, of being *washed* with *water*, and *eating* and *drinking* together (which was all the *Heathens* apprehended by their *use* of *Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*) the *Pro-consuls* and other *Magistrates* in their several *Provinces* bring the *Christians* under these *Edicts*, and so punished them for the *breach* of the *Laws*. Which as appears by *Pliny* his *Epistle* to *Trajan* was the only account on which the *wiser Heathens* did proceed against the *Christians*; for we see he troubled not himself much about the *truth* and *evidence* of *Christian Religion*, but such *persons* were brought before him, and after he had *interrogated* them whether they were *Christians*, or no, *several times*, if they *persisted*, he then *punished* them not so much for their *Religion*, as for their *obstinacy* and *contempt* of *authority*. For so much is *implied* in those words of his, *Neque enim dubitabam, qualecunque esset quod faterentur, pervicaciam certe, & inflexibilem obstinationem debere puniri: That what-ever their Religion was, their obstinacy and disobedience deserved punishment.* That which the *Christians* now pleaded for themselves, why they should not be reckoned among the *factions* of the people, *was* that which they gave in answer to *Pliny*, that all their fault was, *Quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem; seque sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent. That they were wont upon their solemn days to meet together for divine worship, and to covenant with each other only for the practice of those things which were as much for the good of mankind as their own, viz. that they would not wrong and defraud others, as to their bodies or estates.* And *Tertullian* approves of the *Law* against *factions*, as *de providentia & modestia publica, ne civitas in partes scinderetur*, as wisely intended to *prevent Seditions*; but withall pleads, that the *society* of *Christians* could not be reckoned *inter illicitas factiones*; for, saith he, *hæc coitio Christianorum merito sane illicita si illicitis par; merito damnanda si quis de ea queritur eo titulo quo de factionibus*

Lib. 10. *ep.* 97.

Apolog. cap. 38.

bus querela est. In cujus perniciem aliquando convenimus? Hoc sumus congregati quod & dispersi; hoc universi quod & singuli; neminem lædentes, neminem contristantes; quum probi, quum boni coeunt, quum pii, quum casti congregantur, non est factio dicenda sed curia. If, saith he, *the societies of Christians were like others, there might be some reason to condemn them, under the head of factions: but as long as we meet together for no man's injury, that whether divided, or assembled, we are still the same, that we grieve and injure no body; when such a company of good men meet together, it is rather a Council than a Faction.*

2. Another *Law* the *Christians* were brought under, was, that against *Innovations in Religion*; thence it was laid so much to the charge of the *Christians*, that they did ζῆν παρανόμως, *go contrary to the established Law*; as *Porphyrie* said of *Origen*, because he was a Christian, he did χριστιανῶς ζῆν καὶ παρανόμως, and when he speaks of *Ammonius* revolting from *Christianity* to *Paganism*, ἰουδὺς πρὸς τὴν κατὰ νόμους πολιτείαν μεταβάλλετο, *he turned to the way of life, which was agreeable to the established Laws.* Now *Christianity* was every-where looked on as a great *Innovation*, insomuch that the *Christians* were accused to be *legum, morum, naturæ inimici*, as *enemies to mankind as well as the Laws*, because they drew *men* off from that *way* of *Religion* which *mankind* had generally agreed in. Thence *Æmilianus* the *Præfect* of *Ægypt*, when he bids the Christians return to Paganism, he used these *expressions*, ἐπὶ τὸ κατὰ φύσιν τρέπεσθαι· ἐπιλαθέσθαι δὲ καὶ τοῦ παρὰ φύσιν, *to return to the common sence of mankind, and to forget what was so much against it*, as he supposed *Christianity* to be. When *Paul* preached at *Athens*, his first *accusation* was, that *he was a Preacher of strange Deities, because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection.* And *Demetrius* at *Ephesus* knew no such potent *argument* against *Paul*, as that his Religion *destroyed the worship of* Diana, *whom all* Asia *and the world worship.* So that the Primitive *Christians* were then accounted the *Antipodes* to the whole *world*, on which *account* they were so severely *dealt* with; most *Common-wealths* observing the counsel of *Mecænas* to *Augustus*, in *Dio*, to be sure to have a watchfull *eye* upon all *Innovations* in Religion, because they tend so much to the *disturbance* of the *Civil State.*

Apud Euseb l.6. Eccles. hist. cap. 19.

Tertul Apol c 4.

Apud Euseb. Eccl. hist. l.7. cap. 11.

Act. 17. 18. 19. 27.

3. The

3. The *Law of Sacriledge.* Thence *Lactantius* calls their Laws, *Constitutiones Sacrilegæ. Quia etiam sceleratissimi homicidæ contra pios jura impia condiderunt; nam & constitutiones Sacrilegæ, & disputationes Jurisperitorum legantur injustæ*; and as he tells us, *Domitius Ulpianus* had collected all those *Rescripta nefaria* together, which concerned the Christians; from hence it was, *Christianity* by *Pliny*, is called *amentia*, by *Tacitus exitiabilis superstitio*, by *Suetonius Superstitio nova & exitiabilis*; so much did these three great men agree, in condemning the *best Religion* in the *world* for *madness*, and *new*, and *detestable Superstition*; the ground of the great *pique* was, the *enmity* declared by *Christians* against the *Idolatrous Temples*, and *worship* of the *Heathens*. *Lactant. l. 5. cap. 11.* *Plin. ep. l. 10. ep. 97.* *Tacit. An. l. 15.* *Sueton. in Nerone.*

4. The *Law* against *Treason*; for sometimes they proceeded so high, as to *accuse* the Christians *læsæ Majestatis*, and thence they are commonly called *publici hostes*, *enemies to all civil Government*. Which they inferr'd from hence: 1. *Because they would not sacrifice for the Emperour's safety*; *Ideo committimus*, saith *Tertullian*, *in Majestatem Imperatorum, quia illos non subjicimus rebus suis*; *Quia non ludimus de officio salutis eorum, qui eam non putamus in manibus esse plumbatis.* The accusation for *Treason* lay in their *refusing* to *supplicate* the *Idols* for the *Emperour's* welfare. 2. *Because they would not swear by the Emperour's Genius.* Thence *Saturnius* said to the Martyr, *Tantum jura per genium Cæsaris nostri*, if he would but swear by the *Genius* of *Cæsar*, he should be *saved*. Yet though they refused to *swear* by the *Emperour's* Genius, they did not refuse to testifie their *Allegiance*, and to *swear* by the *Emperour's safety*. *Sed & juramus*, saith *Tertullian*, *sicut non per genios Cæsarum, ita per salutem eorum quæ est augustior omnibus geniis.* 3. *Because they would not worship the Emperours as Gods*; which was then grown a common custom. *Non enim Deum Imperatorem dicam, vel quia mentiri nescio, vel quia illum deridere non audeo, vel quia nec ipse se Deum volet dici si homo sit*, as the same *Authour* speaks. Nay the Primitive Christians were very scrupulous of calling the Emperour *Dominus*, *hoc enim Dei est cognomen*, because the name *Lord* was an *attribute* of God's, and applied as his name to *him* in *Scripture*. The *reason* of this *Scrupulosity* was not, from any *question* they made of the *Sovereignty* of *Princes*, or their *obligation* *Tertul. Ap. c. 27. c. 35.* *Apol. c. 29.* *Herald. in Tertul. Apol. cap. 29.* *Apol. c. 32.* *Cap. 33.*

tion to *obedience* to them, (which they are very free in the acknowledgment of,) but from a *jealouſie* and juſt *ſuſpicion* that ſomething of *Divine honour* might be *implied* in it, when the *adoration* of *Princes* was grown a cuſtom. Therefore *Tertullian* to prevent miſ-underſtandings, ſaith, *Dicam plane Imperatorem Dominum, ſed more Communi, ſed quando non cogor ut Dominum Dei vice dicam.* They refuſed not the name in a common ſence, but as it implied *Divine honour.*

Cap. 34.

4. *Becauſe they would not obſerve the publick feſtivals* of the *Emperors* in the way that *others* did, which it ſeems were obſerved with abundance of *looſeneſs* and *debauchery* by all ſorts of *perſons*; and as *Tertullian* ſmartly ſays, *Malorum morum licentia pietas erit; & occaſio luxuriæ religio deputabitur? Debauchery is accounted a piece of loyalty, and intemperance a part of religion.* Which made the *Chriſtians* rather hazard the *reputation* of their *loyalty*, than bear a *part* in ſo much *rudeneſs* as was then uſed, and thence they abhorred all the ſolemn *ſpectacles* of the *Romans*; *Nihil eſt nobis*, ſaith the ſame Author, *dictu, viſu, auditu, cum inſania Circi, cum impudicitia Theatri, cum atrocitate arenæ, cum Xyſti vanitate. They had nothing to do either with the madneſs of the Cirque, or the immodeſty of the Theatre, or the cruelty of the Amphitheatre, or the vanity of the publick wreſtlings.* We ſee then what a hard *Province* the *Chriſtians* had, when ſo many *Laws* were laid as *bird-lime* in their *way* to *catch* them, that it was *impoſſible* for them to *profeſs* themſelves *Chriſtians*, and not run into a *præmunire* by their *Laws.* And therefore it cannot be *conceived* that many out of *affectation* of *novelty* ſhould then declare themſelves *Chriſtians*, when ſo great *hazards* were run upon the profeſſing of it. Few *ſoft-ſpirited* men, and *lovers* of their own *eaſe*, but would have found ſome *fine diſtinctions* and *nice evaſions* to have *reconciled* themſelves to the publick *Laws* by ſuch *things* which the Primitive *Chriſtians* ſo *unanimouſly refuſed*, when tending to *Prophaneneſs* or *Idolatry.* And from this *diſcourſe* we cannot but conclude with the *Apoſtle Paul*, *That the weapons* whereby the *Apoſtles* and Primitive *Chriſtians* encoun-

Cap. 35.

Cap. 38.

2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.

tred the *Heathen world*, *were not fleſhly or weak*, but exceeding *ſtrong and powerfull*, in that they obtained ſo great a *conqueſt* over the *imaginations* and *carnal reaſonings* of *men* (which were their *ſtrong holds* they ſecured themſelves in) as to make them

readily

readily to forsake their *Heathen worship*, and become chearfull *servants* to *Christ*. Thus we see the *power* of the *doctrine* of *Christ*, which prevailed over the *principles* of *education*, though *backt* with pretended *antiquity*, *universality*, and *establishment* by *civil Laws*.

But this will further appear if we consider that not only the *matters* of *faith* were contrary to the *principles* of *education*, but because many of them seemed *incredible* to men's *natural reason*; that we cannot think persons would be overforward to believe such things. Every one being so ready to take any *advantage* against a *Religion* which did so little flatter corrupt *nature* either as to its *power* or *capacity*; insomuch that those who preached this *Doctrine*, declared openly to the world, that such *persons* who would judge of the *Christian Doctrine*, by such *principles* which mere *natural reason* did proceed upon (such one I suppose it is whom the *Apostle* calls Ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος, one that owned nothing but *natural reason*, whereby to *judge* of *Divine Truths*) *could not* entertain *matters* of *faith*, or of *Divine revelation*, because *such things* would seem but *folly* to him that owned no higher *principle* than *Philosophy*, or that did not *believe* any *Divine inspiration*; *neither can such a one know them*, because a *Divine revelation* is the only *way* to *come* to a thorough *understanding* of them: and a *person* who doth not believe such a *Divine revelation*, it is impossible he should be a competent *judge* of the *truth* of the *Doctrine* of *Christ*. So that the only ground of *receiving* the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel* is upon a *Divine revelation*, that *God* himself by his *Son* and his *Apostles*, hath revealed these deep *mysteries* to the *world*, on which account it is we are *bound* to receive *them*, although they go *beyond* our *reach* and *comprehension*. But we see *generally* in the *Heathen* world how few of those did believe the *Doctrine* of *Christ* in comparison, who were the great *admirers* of the *Philosophy*, and *way* of *learning* which was then *cried* up: the *reason* was, because *Christianity* not only *contained* far deeper *mysteries* than any they were acquainted with, but *delivered* them in such a *way* of *authority*, commanding them to *believe* the *doctrine* they preached on the account of the *Divine Authority* of the *revealers* of it. Such a way of *proposal* of *doctrines* to the world the *Philosophy* of the *Greeks* was unacquainted with, which on that

Sect. 22. 2.

1 Cor. 2. 14.

that account they *derided* as not being *ſuited* to the *exact method* which their *ſciences* proceeded in. No doubt had the *Apoſtles* come among the *Greeks* μὴ πολλῆς φαντασίας with a *great deal* of *pomp* and *oſtentation*, and had fed men's *curioſities* with *vain* and *unneceſſary ſpeculations*, they might have had as many *followers* among the *Greeks* for their *ſakes*, as *Chriſt* had among the *Jews* for the *ſake* of the *loaves*. But the *matters* of the *Goſpel* being more of *inward worth* and *moment*, than of *outward pomp* and *ſhew*, the *vain* and *empty Greeks* preſently find a *quarrel* with the *manner* of *propoſing* them; that they came not in a *way* of *clear demonſtration*, but ſtood ſo much upon *faith* as ſoon as they were delivered. Thence *Celſus* and *Galen* think they have *reaſon* enough to reject the *Laws* of *Moſes* and *Chriſt*, becauſe *Celſus* calls them νόμους ἀναποδείκτους, *Ga-*

Orig. l. 1 c. Celſ. Gal. de differ. puls. lib. 2. c. 4.

len Chriſtianity, διατεῖχον ἀναπόδεικτον, that they were ſuch *doctrines* which require *faith* and *obedience*, without giving men's *reaſon* an *account* of the things *commanded*. As though the *authority* of a *Legiſlator* ſufficiently *manifeſted*, were not enough to *enforce* a *Law*, unleſs a ſufficient *account* were given of the *thing required* to the purblind *reaſon* of every *individual perſon* acted by *paſſions* and *private intereſts*, as to the *juſtice* and *equity* of it. And ſo the primary *obligation* on man's *part* to *faith* and *obedience*, muſt ariſe not from the *evidence* of *Divine Authority*, but of the *thing* it ſelf which is *revealed*, to the moſt partial *judgment* of every *one* to whom it is *propoſed*. Which thoſe who know how ſhort the *ſtock* of *reaſon* is at the *beſt* in men, and how eaſily *that* which *is*, is *faſhioned* and *moulded* according to *prejudices* and *intereſts* already entertained, will look upon only as a *deſign* to comply with the carnal *deſires* of men, in that thereby none ſhall be bound to go any further, than this *blind* and *corrupted guide* ſhall *lead* them. Now theſe *being* the *terms* on which the *Goſpel* of *Chriſt* muſt have expected entertainment in the *Gentile world*, how impoſſible had it been ever to have found any *ſucceſs* among *men*, had there not been ſufficient *evidence* given by a *power* of *miracles*, that however *ſtrange* and *incredible* the *doctrine* might ſeem, yet it was to be *believed*, becauſe there was ſufficient *means* to convince men that it was of *Divine revelation*.

Neither

Neither were the *matters* of *faith* only contrary to the *inclinations* of the *world*, but so were the *precepts* of *life* or those *things* in *Christianity* which concerned *practice*. There are two *things* which are the main *scope* and *design* of *Christianity* in reference to men's *lives*, and to take them off from their *sins*, and from the *world*; and of all things these are they which men's *hearts* are so *bewitched* with. Now the *precepts* of the *Gospel* are such which require the greatest *purity of heart and life*, which call upon men *to deny themselves, and all ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world*; that, *all that name the name of Christ must depart from iniquity*; that, *all true Christians must be cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and must perfect holiness in the fear of God.* And the *Gospel* enforceth these *precepts* of *holiness* with the most terrible *denunciations* of the *wrath* of *God* on those who *disobey them*; that, *the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ.* That, *the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.* That, no *persons* who *live* in *the habitual practice* of any *known sin, shall inherit the Kingdom of God.* That, *no man should deceive them with vain words, for because of these things comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience*; that men do but vainly *flatter* themselves when they seek to *reconcile* unholy *lives* with the *hopes* of *future happiness*; for *without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.* And then in reference to the *things* of this *present life* which men busie themselves so much *about*, the *Gospel* declares, that, *they who love this world, the love of the Father is not in them*; that, *the friendship of this world is enmity with God*; *and whosoever will be a friend of the world is an enemy to God:* That *Christians must not set their affections on Earth, but on the things in Heaven*; That *the conversation of true Christians is in Heaven.* That, we ought not to *lay up our treasure on Earth, but in Heaven*; That, *we must not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen*; *for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.* Now the whole *design* of the *doctrine* of *Christ* being to *persuade* men to lead a *holy* and *heavenly life* while they

Sect. 23.

Mat. 5. 8, 16, 24.
Tit. 2. 12.
2 Tim. 2. 19.
2 Cor. 7. 1.
2 Thes. 1. 7, 8.
Rom. 1. 18.
1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.
Gal. 4. 20.
Ephes. 5. 5, 6.
Heb. 12. 14.
1 Joh. 2. 14.
James 4. 4.
Col. 3. 1, 2.
Phil. 3. 20.
Mat. 6. 20.
2 Cor. 4. 18.

are

are in this world, and thereby to *be made meet to be partakers*
Col. 1. 12. *of the inheritance with the Saints in light*, can we think ſo many *men* whoſe *hearts* were *wedded* to *ſin*, and the *world*, could ſo *ſuddenly* be brought off from *both* without a *divine power* accompanying that *doctrine* which was *preached* to them? And
Rom. 1. 16. therefore the *Apoſtle* ſaith, οὐ ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ χριστοῦ, *I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt*; i. e. though the *Goſpel* of *Chriſt* be the only true *myſtery*, yet I do not by it as the *Heathens* are wont to do with their famous *Eleuſinian myſteries* which were kept ſo ſecret by all the *myſtæ* and ἐποπται; but, ſaith he, I *know no reaſon* I have to be *aſhamed* of any *thing* in the *Goſpel*, that I ſhould *labour* its *concealment* to *advance* its *veneration*; but the more *publick* the *Goſpel* is, the more it manifeſts its *power*; for through it *God* is pleaſed mightily to *work*, in order to the *ſalvation* both of *Jew* and *Gentile*. And of all the *ſucceſs* of the *Goſpel*, that upon the *hearts* and *lives* of *men* deſerves the *greateſt conſideration*.

The great *efficacy* and *power* of the *Goſpel* was abundantly ſeen in that great *alteration* which it wrought in all thoſe who were the *hearty imbracers* of it. The *Philoſophers* did very frequently and deſervedly *complain* of the great *inefficacy* of all their *moral precepts* upon the *minds* of *men*, and that by all their *inſtructions*, *politiora non meliora*, *ingenia fiunt*, men *improved* more in *knowledge* than *goodneſs*, but now *Chriſtianity* not only enforced *duties* on *men* with greater *power* and *authority*: For the *Scriptures* do, as Saint *Auſtin* ſpeaks, *Non tanquam ex Philoſophorum concertationibus ſtrepere, ſed tanquam ex oraculis & Dei nubibus intonare*, not make ſome obſtreperous *clamours*, like thoſe *tinkling Cymbals*, the *Philoſophers*, but awe the ſouls of men with the *majeſty* of that *God* from whom they came. Neither was it only a great and empty *ſound* which was heard in the *preaching* of the *Goſpel*; but when *God* thundred therein, he broke down the *ſtately Cedars*, and *ſhook the*
Pſal. 29. 5, 8, 9. *Wilderneſs*, and *made the Hinds to Calve*, (as it is ſaid of *Thunder*, called the *voice of the Lord* in *Scripture*,) he *humbled* the *pride* of *men*, *unſetled* the *Gentile* world from its former *foundations*, and wrought great *alterations* on all thoſe who *hearkened* to it. The whole *deſign* of the *Goſpel* is *couched* in thoſe words which Saint *Paul* tells us were ſpoken to him by *Chriſt* himſelf, when he appointed him to be an *Apoſtle*, *to open*

Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, l. 2. c. 19.

men's

men's eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which were sanctified by faith in Christ. And the *efficacy* of this *doctrine* in order to these great *ends*, was abundantly *seen* in the *preaching* of that *Apostle*, who was so *instrumental* in converting the *world* to *piety* and *sobriety*, as well as to the *doctrine* of *Christ*. What strange *persons* were the *Corinthians* before they became *Christians!* for when the *Apostle* had enumerated many of the vilest *persons* of the *world*, he presently adds, *And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.* The more *dangerous* the *distemper* is, the more *malignant* its *nature*; the more *inveterate* its *continuance*, the greater the *efficacy* of the *remedy* which works a *cure* of it. The *power* of *grace* is the more seen in *conversion*, the *greater* the *sins* have been before it. It is an easie *matter* in comparison to *remove* a *disease* at its first *on-set*, of what it is to *cure* it when it becomes *Chronical*. The *power* of the *Gospel* wrought upon all *sorts* and *kinds* of *persons* to *manifest* to the *world* there was no *distemper* of men's *souls* so *great*, but there was a *possibility* of a *remedy* for it; and not only so, but *pregnant* and *visible instances* were given of the *power* and *efficacy* of it. *For they themselves shew of us*, saith the *Apostle*, *what manner of entring in we had among you, and how ye turned to God from Idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from Heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.* Now that which manifests the exceeding great *power* and *excellency* of the *Gospel*, was, that it not only *turned* men from one *way* of *worship* to another, which is a *matter* of no great *difficulty*, but that it turned men together with *that* from their *lusts* and *sensuality*, to a *holy* and *unblameable life*. For *men* being *more* in *love* with their *sins*, than with their *opinions*, it must needs be a greater *power* which draws men from the *practice* of *habitual sins*, than that which *only* makes them *change* their *opinions*, or *alter* the *way* of *worship* they were brought up in. This is that which *Origen* throughout his *Books* against *Celsus triumphs* in as the most signal *evidence* of a *Divine power* in the *Doctrine* of *Christ*, that it wrought so great an *alteration* on all that *truly* embraced

Acts 26. 18.

1 Cor. 6. 10, 11.

1 Thes. 1. 9, 10.

braced it, that of *vitious*, *debauched*, and *diſſolute*, it made them *temperate*, *ſober*, and *religious*, ὅτι τοιούτους ἀνθρώπους ὅσης φύσεως ἀπὸ τῆς χρείττονος ἦν καὶ ἐπὶ φύσιν μὲν σωφροσύνης καὶ ἦν λοιπῶν ἀρετῶν βίον. *The Doctrine of Chriſt did convert the moſt wicked perſons who embraced it, from all their debaucheries, to a life moſt ſuitable to nature and reaſon, and to the practice of all vertues.* Therefore certainly the *Goſpel* could not *want* that commendation among all *ingenuous Moraliſts*, that it was the moſt excellent *inſtrument* in the *world* to *reform* the *lives* of *men*, and to *promote real goodneſs* in it. When they could not but take *notice* of ſo many *perſons* continually ſo *brought* off from their *follies* and *vain converſations*, to a *life*, *ſerious*, *ſober*, and *unblameable*; nay and ſome of the *Chriſtians* were of ſo much *integrity* and *goodneſs*, that their greateſt *enemies* were forced to ſay that their only *fault* was, that they were *Chriſtians*. *Bonus vir Cajus Sejus, tantum quod Chriſtianus. A very good man, only a Chriſtian.* But one would think this ſhould have made them have a higher *opinion* of *Chriſtianity*, when it did ſo ſuddenly *make* ſo many *good men* in the *world*. Eſpecially when this *power* was ſo *manifeſt* on ſuch *perſons* who were ſuppoſed *uncapable* of being *reformed* by *Philoſophy*, *young*, *illiterate*, and *mean-ſpirited perſons*; therefore it may be juſtly *ſuppoſed* that it was not by the *ſtrength* of their own *reaſon* that this *alteration* was wrought within them, but by that *Divine power* which was *able* to *tame* the moſt *unruly*; to *inſtruct* the moſt *ignorant*, to *raiſe* up the moſt *ſordid perſons* to ſuch a *generous temper*, as to *ſlight* the *good things* of this *life*, in compariſon with *thoſe* to come. And ſo remarkable was the *difference* of *life* then between *thoſe* that were *Chriſtians*, and thoſe who were not (as there is ſtill between *true Chriſtians*, and *mere pretenders*) that *Origen* dares *Celſus* to compare *them* in point of *morality* with any other *Societies* in the world. εἰ δὲ τῷ θεῷ λειτουργοῦσαι ἐκκλησίαι, ζυνεξεταζόμεναι τοῖς παρ' ἡμῖν ἐκκλησίαις, ὡς φωστῆρές εἰσιν ἐν κόσμῳ· τίς δὲ οὐκ ἂν ὁμολογήσαι καὶ τὰς χείρους ἦν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, καὶ ζυγχείσας βελτίοσιν ἐλάττους, πολλῶν κρείττους τυγχάνειν ἦν ἐν τοῖς ἡμετέροις ἐκκλησιῶν; *For the Churches of God, which are diſcipled to Chriſt, being compared with other Societies, ſhine among them like lights in the world. For who can but confeſs, that even the worſer part*

C. Celſum, l. 2. p. 78. 85. lib. 1. p. 21.

Orig. c. Celſ. l. 3. p. 128.

part of the Christian Churches exceeds the best of the popular Assemblies? For, as he goes on, *the Church of God which is at* Athens, *that is* θεραπεία τις ἐν εὐσεβείᾳ, *very quiet and peaceable, because it seeks to approve it self to God; but the popular Assembly at* Athens *that is* στασιώδης, *seditious and quarrelsome, and in nothing comparable to the Church of God there. So it is, if we compare the Churches of* Corinth *and* Alexandria *with the Assemblies of the people there. So that any candid inquirer after truth will exceedingly wonder* (how such fair *Islands* should appear *nantes in gurgite vasto*, in the midst of such a *Sea* of *wickedness* as it was in those *Cities*) *how these Churches of God should be planted in such rude and prophane places.* So the same *Authour* goes on to compare the *Church's Senate* with that of the *Cities*, the *Church's Officers* with *theirs*, and *appeals* to *themselves*, that even *those* among them who were most *lukewarm* in their *office*, did yet far exceed all the *City-Magistrates* in all manner of *vertues*. From whence he rationally *concludes*, εἰ δὲ ταῦθ' οὕτως ἔχει, πῶς οὐκ εὔλογον μὲν νομίζειν περὶ τῆς Ἰησοῦ τοσαύτα ζευχθῆναι δυνηθέντος, ὅτι οὐκ ἦν ἡ τυχοῦσα, θειότης ἢ ἐν ἀνθρ῾ῳ; *If these things be so, how can it but be most rational to adore the Divinity of Jesus, who was able to accomplish such great things?* And that not upon *one* or *two*, but upon such great *multitudes* as were then *converted* to the *Christian faith*. We read of one *Phædon*, and one *Polemon* brought from their *debaucheries* by *Socrates* and *Xenocrates*, but what are these compared with *those* who were turned from their *sins* to *God* by the *Gospel* of *Christ*! καὶ ᾧδε μὲν τοῖς Ἕλλησιν, εἴς τε Φαίδων καὶ οὐκ οἶδα εἰ Λύτιφ῾ον, καὶ εἴς Πολέμωνα, μεταβαλόντες ἀπὸ ἀσώτου καὶ μοχθηροτάτου βίου, ἐφιλοσόφησαν· ᾧδε δὲ τῷ Ἰησοῦ οὐ μόνοι τότε οἱ δώδεκα, ἀλλ' ἀεὶ καὶ πολλαπλασίους, &c. *The twelve Apostles were but the first-fruits of that plentifull Harvest of Converts which followed afterwards.* And although *Celsus* (like an *Epicurean*) seems to deny the *possibility* of any such thing as *conversion*, because *customary sins* become a *second nature*, that no *punishments* can *reform them*; *Yet*, saith *Origen*, *herein he not only contradicts us Christians, but all such as were* γνησίως φιλοσοφοῦντες, *who owned any generous principles of Philosophy, and did not despair of recovering vertue, as a thing feasible by humane nature*, and gives *instances ad hominem*, to prove the *possibility* of the *thing* from the *ancient Heroes*, *Hercules* and *Ulysses*, from

Orig. l. 1. p. 50.

Orig. l. 3 p. 150.

the two *Philoſophers*, *Socrates* and *Muſonius*, and the two famous *converts* to *Philoſophy*, *Phædon* and *Polemon*. *But yet*, ſaith he, *theſe are not ſo much to be wondred at, that the eloquence and reaſon of the Philoſophers ſhould prevail on ſome very few perſons, but that the mean and contemptible language of the Apoſtles ſhould convert ſuch multitudes from intemperance to ſobriety, from injuſtice to fair-dealing, from cowardice to the higheſt conſtancy, yea ſo great as to lay down their lives for the ſake of vertue; how can we but admire ſo divine a power as was ſeen in it? And therefore*, ſaith he, *we conclude*, ὅτι τῷ θείῳ λόγῳ ἀμείλικτος κακίαν φυσιώσασιν ἔξιν οὐ μόνον οὐκ ἀδύνατον, ἀλλὰ καὶ οὐ πάνυ χαλεπὸν. *That it is ſo far from being impoſſible, that it is not at all difficult for corrupt nature to be changed by the Word of God.*

Lactant. de falſ. ſap. l. 3. c. 25. Lactantius excellently manifeſts that *Philoſophy* could never do ſo much *good* in the *world* as *Chriſtianity* did, becauſe that was not *ſuited* at all to *common capacities*, and did require ſo much *skill* in the *Arts* to prepare *men* for it, which it is impoſſible all ſhould be well *skilled* in, which yet are as capable of being *happy*, as any others are. And how *inefficacious* the *precepts* of *Philoſophy* were, appears by the *Philoſophers* themſelves, who were *far* from having *command* by them over their *Maſterleſs paſſions*, and were fain ſometimes to *confeſs* that *nature* was too *head-ſtrong* to be kept in by ſuch weak *reins* as the *precepts* of *Philoſophy* were: *But*, ſaith he, *what great command divine precepts have upon the ſouls of men, daily experience ſhews.*

Cap. 26. *Da mihi virum qui ſit iracundus, maledicus, effrenatus; pauciſſimis Dei verbis, tam placidum quam ovem reddam. Da cupidum, avarum, tenacem; jam tibi eum liberalem dabo, & pecuniam ſuam plenis manibus largientem. Da timidum doloris ac mortis; jam cruces, & ignes, taurum contemnet. Da libidinoſum, adulterum, ganeonem; jam ſobrium, caſtum, continentem videbis. Da crudelem, & ſanguinis appetentem; jam in veram clementiam furor ille mutabitur. Da injuſtum, inſipientem, peccatorem; continuo & æquus, & prudens, & innocens erit.* In which *words* that *elegant writer* doth by a *Rhetorical Scheme* ſet out the remarkable *alteration* which was in any who became *true Chriſtians*, that although they were *paſſionate*, *covetous*, *fearfull*, *luſtfull*, *cruel*, *unjuſt*, *vitious*, yet upon their being *Chriſtians*, they became *mild*, *liberal*, *courageous*, *temperate*, *merciſull*, *juſt and unblameable*; which never any were brought to by mere *Philoſophy*,

phy, which rather teacheth the *art* of *concealing vices*, than of *healing them*. But now when *Christianity* was so *effectual* in the cure of those *distempers*, which *Philosophy* gave over as beyond its *skill* and *power*, when it *cured* them with so great *success*, and that not in a *Paracelsian way*, for them to *relapse* afterwards with greater *violence*, but it did so *throughly unsettle* the *fomes morbi*, that it should never *gather* to so *great* a *head* again; doth not this *argue* a *power* more than *Philosophical*, and that could be no less than *Divine power* which tended so much to *reform* the *world*, and to *promote* true *goodness* in it?

Thus we have considered the *contrariety* of the *doctrine* of *Christ* to men's *natural inclinations*, and yet the strange *success* it *had* in the *world*, which in the last *place* will appear yet more *strange*, when we add the almost *continual opposition it met with from worldly power and policy*. Had it been *possible* for a *cunningly-devised fable*, or any mere *contrivance* of *impostors* to have *prevailed* in the *world*, when the most *potent* and *subtile persons* bent their whole *wits* and *designs* for *suppressing* it? Whatever it were in others, we are sure of some of the *Roman Emperours*, as *Julian* and *Diocletian*, that it was their *master-design* to *root* out and *abolish Christianity*; and was it *only* the *subtilty* of the *Christians* which made these *persons* give over their *work* in *despair* of *accomplishing* it? If the Christians were such *subtile* men, whence came all their *enemies* to agree in one *common calumny*, that they were a company of *poor*, *weak*, *ignorant*, *inconsiderable men!* and if they were so, how came it to pass that by all their *power* and *wisdom* they could never *exterminate* these *persons*; but as they *cut* them *down*, they *grew* up the *faster*, and *multiplied* by their *substraction* of them! There was something then certainly *peculiar* in *Christianity*, from all other *doctrines*, that it not only was not *advanced* by any *civil power*, but it got *ground* by the *opposition* it met *with* in the *world*. And therefore it is an observable *circumstance*, that the first *Christian Emperour* (who acted as *Emperour* for *Christianity*) viz. *Constantine* (for otherwise I know what may be said for *Philippus*) did not *appear* in the *world* 'till *Christianity* had *spread* it self over most *parts* of the *habitable world*. *God* thereby letting us see, that though the *civil power*, when become *Christian*, might be very usefull for *protecting Christianity*, Sect. 24.

ſtianity, yet that he ſtood in no *need* at all of it, as to the *Propagation* of it abroad in the *world*. But we ſee it was quite otherwiſe in that *Religion* which had *Mars* its *aſcendant*, viz. *Mahometiſm*; For like *Paracelſus* his *Dæmon*, it always *ſate* upon the pummel of the *ſword*, and made its *way* in the *world* merely by *force* and *violence*; and as its firſt *conſtitution* had much of *blood* in it, ſo by it hath it been *fed* and *nouriſhed* ever ſince. But it was quite otherwiſe with the *Chriſtian Religion*; it never *thrived* better than in the moſt *barren places*, nor *triumphed* more, than when it *ſuffered* moſt; nor *ſpread* it ſelf *further* than when it *encountered* the greateſt *oppoſition*. Becauſe therein was ſeen the great *force* and *efficacy* of the *doctrine* of *Chriſt*, that it *bore up* men's *ſpirits* under the greateſt *miſeries* of *life*, and made them with *chearfulneſs* to *undergo* the moſt exquiſite *torments* which the *cruelty* of *Tyrants* could *invent*. The *Stoicks* and *Epicureans boaſts* that their *wiſe* man would be *happy* in the *Bull* of *Phalaris*, were but *empty* and *Thraſonical words*, which none would venture the *truth* of by an *experiment* upon themſelves. It was the *Chriſtian* alone, and not the *Epicurean*, that could truly ſay in the midſt of torments, *Suave eſt & nihil curo*, and might juſtly alter a little of that common *ſaying* of the *Chriſtians*, and ſay, *Non magna loquimur, ſed patimur*, as well as *vivimus*; *the Chriſtians did not ſpeak great things, but do and ſuffer them.* And this gained not only great *reputation* of *integrity* to *themſelves*, but much *advanced* the *honour* of their *Religion* in the world, when it was ſo apparently *ſeen*, that no *force* or *power* was able to *withſtand* it. Will not this at leaſt *perſuade* you that our *Religion* is *true*, and from *God*, ſaith *Arnobius*? *Quod cum genera pœnarum tanta ſint à vobis propoſita Religionis hujus ſequentibus leges, augeatur res magis, & contra omnes minas atque interdicta formidinum animoſius populus obnitatur, & ad credendi ſtudium, prohibitionis ipſius ſtimulis excitetur?* —— *Itane iſtud non divinum & ſacrum eſt, aut ſine Deo, eorum tantas animorum fieri converſiones ut cum carnifices unci, aliique innumeri cruciatus, quemadmodum diximus, impendeant creduturis, veluti quadam dulcedine, atque omnium virtutum amore correpti, cognitas accipiant rationes, atque mundi omnibus rebus præponant amicitias Chriſti? That no fears, penalties, or torments, were able to make a Chriſtian alter his profeſſion, but he would rather bid*

Arnob. l. 2. c. gentes.

bid adieu to his Life than to his Saviour. This *Origen* likewise frequently takes notice of, when *Celsus* had objected the *novelty* of *Christianity*; *The more wonderfull it is* (saith *Origen*) *that in so short a time it should so largely spread it self in the world; for if the cure of men's bodies be not wrought without Divine Providence, how much less the cure of so many thousands of souls which have been converted at once to Humanity and Christianity, especially when all the powers of the world were from the first engaged to hinder the progress of this doctrine, and yet notwithstanding all this opposition,* ἐνίκησε, μὴ πφυκὼς κωλύεσθαι ὡς λόγος θεῦ καὶ γνώμεν πσόντων ἀνταγωνισῶν ἰσχυότερος, πίσας μὲν Ἑλλάδος, ὅτι πλεῖον ἢ τὰ βαρβάρα ἐκράτησε, καὶ μετεποίησε μυρίας ὅσας ψυχὰς ὅτι τὴν κατ' αὐτὸν θεοσέβειαν. *The Word of God prevailed, as not being able to be stopt by men, and became Master over all its enemies, and not only spread it self quite through* Greece, *but through a great part of the world besides, and converted an innumerable company of souls to the true worship and service of God.* Thus we have now *manifested* from all the *circumstances* of the *propagation* of the *doctrine* of *Christ*, what *evidence* there was of a *Divine power* accompanying of it, and how *usefull* the first *miracles* were in order to it.

Lib. 1. & Celsum, p. 21. V. etiam, l. 2. p. 110.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The difference of true Miracles from falſe.

The unreaſonableneſs of rejecting the evidence from miracles, becauſe of impoſtures. That there are certain rules of diſtinguiſhing true miracles from falſe, and divine from diabolical, proved from God's intention in giving a power of miracles, and the providence of God in the world. The inconvenience of taking away the rational grounds of faith, and placing it on ſelf-evidence. Of the ſelf-evidence of the Scriptures, and the inſufficiency of that for reſolving the queſtion about the authority of the Scriptures. Of the pretended miracles of Impoſtors and falſe Chriſts, as Barchochebas, David el-David *and others. The rules whereby to judge true miracles from falſe.* 1. *True Divine miracles are wrought to confirm a Divine teſtimony. No miracles neceſſary for the certain conveyance of a Divine teſtimony: proved from the evidences that the Scriptures could not be corrupted.* 2. *No miracles Divine which contradict Divine revelation. Of Popiſh miracles.* 3. *Divine miracles leave Divine effects on thoſe who believe them. Of the miracles of* Simon Magus. 4. *Divine miracles tend to the overthrow of the Devil's power in the world: the antipathy of the Doctrine of Chriſt to the Devil's deſign in the world.* 5. *The diſtinction of true miracles from others, from the circumſtances and manner of their operation. The miracles of Chriſt compared with thoſe of the Heathen Gods.* 6. *God makes it evident to all impartial judgments that Divine miracles exceed Created power. This manifeſted from the unparallell'd miracles of* Moſes *and our Saviour. From all which the rational evidence of Divine revelation is manifeſted, as to the perſons whom God imploys to teach the world.*

Sect. 1. HAving thus far ſtated the *caſes* wherein *miracles* may juſtly be *expected* as a *rational evidence* of *Divine authority* in the *perſons* whom *God* imploys by way of peculiar *meſſage* to the *world*, and in the *proſecution* of this *diſcourſe* mani-

manifested the *evidences* of *Divine authority* in *Moses* and the *Prophets*, and in our *Saviour* and his *Apostles*; the only remaining *question* concerning this *subject*, is, *How we may certainly distinguish true and real miracles from such as are only pretended and counterfeit?* For it being as *evident* that there have been *impostures* and *delusions* in the world as *real miracles*, the minds of *men* will be wholly to *seek* when to rely upon the *evidence* of *miracles* as an *argument* of *Divine authority* in those persons who do them, unless a *way* be found out to distinguish them from each other. But if we can make it appear, that, unless men through *weakness* of *judgment* or *incogitancy* deceive themselves, they may have certain *evidence* of the *truth* of *miracles*, then there can be nothing wanting as to the *establishment* of their *minds* in the *truth* of that *Doctrine* which is confirmed by them. There hath been nothing which hath made men of better *affections* than *understandings*, so ready to suspect the *strength* of the *evidence* from *miracles* concerning *Divine testimony*, as the multitude of *impostures* in the *world* under the *name* of *miracles*, and that the *Scripture* it self tells us we must not hearken to such as come with *lying wonders*. But may we not therefore safely rely on such *miracles* which we have certain *evidence* could not be wrought but by *Divine power*, because forsooth the *Devil* may sometimes *abuse* the *ignorance* and *credulity* of unwary men? or is it because the *Scripture* forbids us to *believe* such as should come with a *pretence* of *miracles*, therefore we cannot rely on the *miracles* of *Christ* himself? which is as much as to say, because the *Scripture* tells us that we must not believe *every spirit*, therefore we must believe *none* at all; or because we must not entertain any *other doctrine* besides the *Gospel*, therefore we have no *reason* to believe that. For the *ground* whereby we are assured by the *Scriptures*, that the *testimony* of *Christ* was *divine*, and therefore his *doctrine true*, is because it was *confirmed* by such *miracles* as he did; now if that *argument* were *insufficient* which the *Scriptures* tell us was the great *evidence* of *Christ's* being *sent from God*, we cannot give our selves a sufficient *account* in point of *evidence*, on which we believe the *doctrine* of the *Gospel* to be *true* and *divine*. But the only *rational pretence* of any scruple in this case must be a supposed *uncertainty* in our *rules* of judging concerning the *nature*

of *miracles*; for there be no certain κριτηρια or *notes* of *difference*, whereby to *know Divine miracles* from *deluſions* of *ſenſes* and the *impoſtures* of the *Devil*, I muſt confeſs that there is an apparent *inſufficiency* in the *evidence* from *miracles*; but if there be any certain *rules* of *proceeding* in this *caſe*, we are to blame nothing but our *incredulity*, if we be not *ſatisfied* by them. For the full *clearing* of this, I ſhall firſt *make it appear that there may be certain evidence found out, whereby we may know true miracles from falſe, and divine from diabolical.* And, Secondly, *Enquire into thoſe things which are the main notes of difference between them.* Firſt, *That there may be certain evidence whereby to know the truth of miracles.* I ſpeak not of the difference *ex parte rei* between *miracles*, and thoſe called *wonders*, as that the *one* exceed the *power* of *created agents*, and the other doth not; for this leaves the *enquirer* as far to *ſeek* for *ſatisfaction* as ever; for granting that a *Divine power* is ſeen in one, and not in the other, he muſt needs be ſtill *diſſatisfied*, unleſs it can be made *evident* to him that ſuch *things* are from *Divine power*, and others cannot be. Now the main *diſtinction* being placed here in the *natures* of the *things abſtractly* conſidered, and not as they bear any *evidence* to our *underſtandings*, inſtead of *reſolving doubts* it increaſeth more; for, as for inſtance, in the caſe of the *Magicians Rods* turning into *Serpents*, as well as *Moſes* his; what *ſatisfaction* could this yield to any *ſpectator*, to tell him, that in the *one* there was a *Divine power*, and not in the *other*, unleſs it were made *appear* by ſome *evidence* from the *thing*, that the *one* was a mere *impoſture*, and the other a *real alteration* in the *thing* it ſelf? I take it then for granted, that no general *diſcourſes* concerning the *formal difference* of *miracles* and *wonders* conſidered in themſelves, can afford any *rational ſatisfaction* to an *inquiſitive mind*; that which alone is able to *give* it, muſt be *ſomething* which may be *diſcerned* by any *judicious* and *conſiderative perſon.* And that *God* never gives to any a *power* of *miracles*, but he gives ſome ſuch *ground* of *ſatisfaction* concerning them, will appear upon theſe two *conſiderations.*

1. *From God's intention in giving to any this power of doing miracles.* We have largely made it manifeſt that the end of true *miracles* is to be a *confirmation* to the *world* of the *Divine commiſſion*

commission of the *persons* who have it, and that the *testimony* is *Divine* which is confirmed by it. Now if there be no *way* to know when *miracles* are *true* or *false*, this *power* is to no *purpose* at all; for men are as much to *seek* for *satisfaction*, as if there had been no such things at all. Therefore if *men* are *bound* to *believe* a *Divine Testimony*, and to rely on the *miracles* wrought by the *persons* bringing it, as an evidence of it, they must have some *assurance* that these *miracles* could not come from any but a *Divine Power*.

2. *From the Providence of God in the World*; which if we own, we cannot imagine that *God* should permit the *Devil*, whose only design is to ruine *mankind*, to *abuse* the *credulity* of the *world* so far, as to have his *lying wonders* pass *uncontrouled*, which they must do, if nothing can be found out as a certain *difference* between such *things* as are only of *Diabolical*, and such as are of Divine power. If then it may be *discovered* that there is a *malignant Spirit* which acts in the *world* and doth *produce strange* things, either we must impute all *strange things* to him, which must be to attribute to him an *infinite power*, or else that there is a being *Infinitely perfect* which *crosseth* this *malignant Spirit* in his *designs*; and if so, we cannot imagine he should suffer him to usurp so much *tyranny* over the *minds* of *men*, as to make those things *pass* in the more *sober* and *inquisitive part* of the *world* for *Divine miracles* which were only *counterfeits* and *impostures*. If then the *Providence* of *God* be so deeply *engaged* in the *discovering* the *designs* of *Satan*, there must be some *means* of this *discovery*, and that *means* can be supposed to be no other in this *case*, but some *rational* and *satisfactory evidence*, whereby we may know when strange and miraculous *things* are done by *Satan* to deceive men, and when by a *Divine Power* to confirm a *Divine Testimony*.

But how is it *possible*, say some, that *miracles* should be any *ground* on which to believe a *testimony Divine*, when *Christ* himself hath told us, *that there shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that if it were possible they should deceive the very elect?* and the *Apostle* tells us *that the coming of Antichrist will be with all power and signs, and lying wonders.* How then can we fix on miracles as an evidence of *Divine Testimony*, when we see they *Sect.* 2. Mat. 24. 24. 2 Thes. 2. 9.

are *common* to *good* and *bad men*, and may *ſeal indifferently* either *truth* or *falſhood?* To this I reply;

1. Men are guilty of doing no ſmall *diſſervice* to the *doctrine* of *Chriſt*, when upon ſuch *weak* and *frivolous pretences* they give ſo great an *advantage* to *infidelity*, as to call in queſtion the *validity* of that which yielded ſo ample a *teſtimony* to the *truth* of *Chriſtian Religion*. For if once the *rational grounds* on which we *believe* the *Doctrine* of *Chriſt* to be *true* and *divine*, be taken away, and the whole *evidence* of the *truth* of it be laid on things not only *derided* by men of *Atheiſtical ſpirits*, but in *themſelves* ſuch as cannot be *diſcerned* or *judged* of by *any* but *themſelves*, upon what *grounds* can we proceed to *convince* an *unbeliever* that the doctrine which we believe is true! If they tell him, *that as light and fire manifeſt themſelves, ſo doth the doctrine of the Scripture* to thoſe who believe it; It will be ſoon replied, that *ſelf-evidence* in a *matter of faith* can imply nothing but either a *firm perſuaſion* of the *mind* concerning the thing *propounded*; or elſe that there are ſuch *clear evidences* in the *thing* it *ſelf*, that none who freely uſe their *reaſon* can deny it; the firſt can be no *argument* to any other *perſon* any further than the *authority* of the *perſon* who *declares* it to have ſuch *ſelf-evidence* to him, doth *extend* it ſelf over the *mind* of the *other*; and to *ones* ſelf it ſeems a ſtrange way of arguing, *I believe the Scriptures becauſe they are true, and they are true becauſe I believe them*; for *ſelf-evidence* implies ſo much, if by it be meant the *perſuaſion* of the *mind*, that the *thing* is *true*; but if by *ſelf-evidence* be further meant ſuch clear *evidence* in the *matter propounded*, that all who do conſider it, muſt believe it. I then further *enquire* whether this *evidence* doth lie in the *naked propoſal* of the *things* to the *underſtanding*; and if ſo, then every *one*, who *aſſents* to this *propoſition*, that *the whole is greater than the part*, muſt likewiſe *aſſent* to this, *that the Scripture is the Word of God*; or whether doth the *evidence* lie, not in the *naked propoſal*, but in the *efficacy* of the *Spirit of God* on the *minds* of thoſe to whom it is propounded. Then, 1. The *ſelf-evidence* is taken off from the *written Word* which was the *object*, and *removed* to a quite *different* thing which is the *efficient cauſe*. 2. Whether then any *perſons* who want this *efficacious operation* of the *Spirit* of *God*, *are* or can be *bound* to believe the *Scripture* to be

be *God's Word?* If they are *bound*, the *duty* must be *propounded* in such a way as may be *sufficient* to *convince* them that it is their *duty*; but if all the *evidence* of the *truth* of the *Scripture* lie on this *testimony* of the *Spirit*, then such as *want* this, can have none at all. But if, lastly, by this *self-evidence* be meant such an *impress* of *God's authority* on the *Scriptures* that any who consider them as they ought, cannot but *discern*; I still further *enquire*, whether this *impress* lies *in the positive assertions in Scripture that they are from God*, and that cannot be unless it be made appear to be *impossible* that any *writing* should *pretend* to be from *God* when it is not; or else in *the written Books of Scripture*, and then let it be made *appear* that any one merely by the *evidence* of the *writings* themselves without any further *arguments* can pronounce the *Proverbs* to be the *Word* of *God*, and not the *Book* of *Wisdom*; and *Ecclesiastes* to be *Divinely inspired*, and not *Ecclesiasticus*: or else the *self-evidence* must be *in the excellency of the matters* which are *revealed* in *Scripture*; but this still falls very short of *resolving* wholly the *question* whether *the Scripture be the Word of God?* for the utmost that this can *reach* to is, that the *things* contained in *Scripture* are of so *high* and *excellent a nature*, that we cannot conceive that any *other* should be the *authour* of them but *God* himself; all which being granted, I am as far to seek as ever what *grounds* I have to *believe* that those particular *writings* which we call the *Scripture* are the *Word* of *God*, or that *God* did immediately *imploy such* and *such persons* to *write such* and *such books*; for I may believe the *substance* of the *doctrine* to be of *God*, and yet not believe the *books* wherein it is contained, to be a *divine* and *infallible testimony*; as is evident in the many excellent *devotional Books* which are in the *world*.

But yet further, if the only *ground* on which we are to *believe* a *doctrine Divine* be the *self-evidencing light*, and *power* of it, then I suppose there was the same *ground* of *believing* a *Divine Testimony* when the doctrine was declared without *writing*, by the first *Preachers* of it. So that by this method of *proceeding*, the *ground* of believing *Christ* to be sent as the *Messias* sent from *God*, must be *wholly* and *solely resolved* into this, that there *was* so much *self-evidence* in this proposition uttered by *Christ*, *I am the light of the World*, that all the

Jews

Jews had been bound to have *believed* him sent from *God*, (for *light manifests its self*,) although our *Saviour* had never done any one *miracle*, to make it appear that he came from *God*. And we cannot but charge our *Saviour* on this account with being at a very unnecessary *expence* upon the *world* in doing so many *miracles*, when the bare naked *affirmation* that he was the *Messias*, had been sufficient to have convinced the whole *world*. But is it conceivable then upon what account our *Saviour* should lay so much *force* on the *miracles* done by himself in order to the proving his *Testimony* to be *Divine*, that he saith himself, *that he had a greater witness than that of* John, (who yet doubtless had *self-evidencing light* going along with his *Doctrine* too,) *for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me.* Can any thing be more plain, or have greater *self-evidence* in it, than that our *Saviour* in these words doth lay the *evidence* of his *Divine Testimony* upon the *miracles* which he wrought, which on that account he so often appeals to, on this very *Reason*, *because they bear witness of him*; *and if they would not believe him on his own Testimony, yet they ought to believe him for his work's sake?* Doth all this now amount only to a removing of *prejudices* from the *Person* of *Christ?* which yet according to the *tenour* of the *objection* we are considering of, it is *impossible* the *power* of *miracles* should do, if these *miracles* may be so far *done* or *counterfeited* by false *Christs*, that we can have no certain *evidence* to *distinguish* the *one* from the *other*.

Joh. 5. 36.

Joh. 10. 25, 38. 14. 11. 15. 24.

Sect. 3. Which the *objection* pretends; and was the *great thing* wherein *Celsus* the *Epicurean* triumphed so much, that *Christ should fore-tell that others should come and do miracles which they must not hearken to, and thence would inferr as from Christ's own confession that miracles have in them* οὐδὲν θεῖον, *nothing divine but what may be done by wicked men:* πῶς ἂν οὐ φαῦλον ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν ἔργων τὸν μὲν θεὸν, τοὺς δὲ γόητας ἡγεῖσθαι; *Is it not a wretched thing*, saith he, *that from the same works one should be accounted a God, and others Deceivers?* Whereby those who would *invalidate* the *Argument* from *miracles*, may take notice how *finely* they fall in with *one* of the most bitter enemies of *Christian Religion*, and make *use* of the same *arguments* which he *did*; and therefore *Origen*'s reply to him, will reach them

Orig. lib. 2. c. Celf.

them too. *For*, saith he, *our Saviour in those words of his doth not bid men beware in general of such as did miracles*, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῆς ἀναγρεύσεως ἑαυτοὺς οὐ τοῦ χρείττονος τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ πεισμονώσεις διὰ τινῶν φαντασιῶν περὶ ἑαυτὸς ἐπιτρέψειν τὰς Ἰησοῦ μαθητάς· *but bids them beware of that when men gave themselves out to be the true Christ the Son of God, and endeavour to draw Christ's Disciples from him, by some mere appearances instead of miracles.* Therefore *Christ* being evidently made *appear* to be the *Son* of *God*, by the *powerfull* and *uncontrouled Miracles* which he wrought, what pretence of *Reason* could there be to *hearken* to any who gave themselves out to be *Christs*, merely from some strange wonders which they wrought? And from hence, as he further observes, may be justly inferred contrary to what *Celsus* imagined, that there was certainly an *evidence* of *Divine Power* in *miracles*, when these *false Christs* gave themselves out to be *Christs* merely from the *supposal* that they had this *power* of *doing miracles*. And so it is *evident* in all the *false Christs* which have appeared, they have made this their great *pretence* that they did many *signs* and *wonders*; which *God* might justly *permit* them to do, to punish the great *infidelity* of the *Jews* who would not *believe* in *Christ* notwithstanding those *frequent* and *apparent miracles* which he did, which did infinitely *transcend* those of any such *pretenders*. Such among the *Jews* were *Jonathas*, who after the *destruction* of *Jerusalem*, as *Josephus* tells us, drew many of the *people* into the *Wilderness* of *Cyrene*, σημεῖα καὶ φάσματα λέξειν ὑπισχνούμενος, *promising to shew them many prodigies and strange appearances*. Not long after in the times of *Adrian* appeared that famous *blazing-star Barchochebas*, who not only *portended* but *brought* so much mischief upon the *Jews*; his pretence was that he *vomited flames*; and so he did, such as *consumed himself* and *his followers*: after him many other *Impostors* arose in *Ægypt*, *Cyprus*, and *Crete*, who all went upon the same pretence of doing *Miracles*. In latter times the famous *Impostor* was *David el-David*, whose story is thus briefly reported by *David Ganz*. *David el-David pretended to be the true Messias and rebelled against the King of* Persia, *and did many signs and prodigies before the Jews and the King of* Persia: *at last his head was cut off, and the Jews fined an hundred talents of Gold*; in the Epistle of *Rambam* or *R. Moses Maimon.* It

Tzemach David n. 895.

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is ſaid, *that the King of* Perſia *deſired of him a ſign, and he told him that he ſhould cut off his head and he would riſe again*; (which he cunningly deſired to avoid being tormented,) *which the King was reſolved to try, and accordingly executed him*; but I ſuppoſe his *reſurrection* and *Mahomet's* will be both in a *day*, although *Maimonides* tells us, *ſome of the Jews are yet ſuch fools as to expect his Reſurrection.* Several other *Impoſtors Maimonides* mentions in his *Epiſtle de Auſtrali regione.* One who pretended to be the *Meſſias* becauſe he *cured* himſelf of the *Leproſie* in a night; ſeveral others he mentions in *Spain, France,* and other Parts, and the iſſue of them all was only a further *aggravation* of the *miſeries* and *captivities* of the poor *Jews,* who were ſo *credulous* in following *Impoſtors,* and yet ſuch ſtrange *Infidels* where there were plain and undoubted *miracles* to perſuade them to believe in our bleſſed *Saviour* as the true *Meſſias.* We freely grant then that many pretended *miracles* may be done in the *world,* to deceive *men* with; but doth it hence follow that either there *are* no *true miracles* done in the *world,* or that there are no *certain rules* to diſtinguiſh the *one* from the *other?* But as *Origen* yet further replies to *Celſus,* as a *Wolf* doth very much reſemble a *Dog,* yet they are not of the ſame *kind*; nor a *turtle Dove* and a *Pigeon*; ſo that which is *produced* by a *Divine power* is not of the ſame *Nature* with that which is produced by *Magick*; but as he argues, *Is it poſſible that there ſhould be only deceits in the world and magical operations? and can there be no true miracles at all wrought? Is humane nature only capable of Impoſtures, or can none work miracles but Devils? Where there is a worſe, there may be a better*; *and ſo from the Impoſtures and Counterfeits, we may inferr that there are true miracles, wrought by a Divine power*; *otherwiſe it were all one as to ſay, there are Counterfeits, but no Jewels*; *or there are Sophiſms and Paralogiſms, but no legitimate demonſtrations*; *if then there be ſuch deceits, there are true miracles too*; *all the buſineſs is* βεβασανισμένως τὰς ἐπαγγελομένας τὰς δυνάμεις ἐξετάζειν, *ſtrictly and ſeverely to examine the pretenders to them, and that from the life and manners of thoſe that do them, and from the effects and conſequents of them, whether they do good or hurt in the world, whether they correct men's manners, or bring men to goodneſs, holineſs, and truth, and on this account we are neither*

V. ep. Maimon. in not. Vorſtii ad Tzem. Dav.

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to reject all miracles, nor imbrace all pretences, but carefully and prudently examine the rational evidences whereby those which are true and divine, may be known from such as are counterfeit and diabolical.

And this now leads us to the main *subject* of this Chapter, *viz.* What *rules* we have to *proceed* by, in judging *miracles* to be *true* or *false*; which may be these following. *Sect.* 4.

True Divine Miracles are wrought in confirmation of some Divine Testimony. Because we have manifested by all the precedent *discourse*, that the intention of *miracles* is to *seal* some Divine *Revelation*. Therefore if *God* should work *miracles* when no *Divine Testimony* is to be confirmed, *God* would set the *broad Seal* of *Heaven* to a *blank*. If it be said no, *because it will witness to us now the truth of that Testimony which was delivered so many ages since.* I answer, 1. The truth of that *Testimony* was sufficiently *sealed* at the *time* of the *delivery* of it, and is conveyed *down* in a certain *way* to us. Is it not sufficient that the *Charter* of a *Corporation* had the *Prince's broad Seal* in the *time* of the *giving* of it, but that every *succession* of *men* in that *Corporation* must have a new *broad Seal*, or else they ought to question their *Patent?* What ground can there be for *that*, when the *original Seal* and *Patent* is preserved, and is certainly *conveyed* down from *age* to *age?* So I say it is as to us, *God's Grand Charter* of *Grace* and *Mercy* to the *world* through *Jesus Christ*, was *sealed* by *Divine miracles*, at the delivery of it to the *world*; the *original Patent*, *viz.* the *Scriptures* wherein the *Charter* is contained, is conveyed in a most *certain manner* to us; to this *Patent* the *Seal* is *annexed*, and in it are *contained* those undoubted *miracles* which were wrought in *confirmation* of it, so that a new *sealing* of this *Patent* is wholly needless, unless we had some cause of *suspicion*, that the Original *Patent* it self were lost, or the *first sealing* was not *true*. If the *latter*, then *Christian Religion* is not *true*, if the *Miracles* wrought for *confirmation* of it were *false*, because the *truth* of it depends so much on the *Verity* and *Divinity* of the *Miracles* which were then wrought. If the *first* be *suspected*, *viz.* the certain *conveyance* of the *Patent*, *viz.* the *Scriptures*, some certain *grounds* of such a *suspicion* must be *discovered* in a matter of so great *moment*, especially when the *great* and many *Societies* of the 1.

Christian World do all *consent* unanimously in the contrary. Nay it is impossible that any *rational man* can *conceive* that the *Patent* which we now rely upon, is *supposititious* or *corrupted* in any of those *things* which are of *concernment* to the *Christian World*; and that on these *accounts*.

1. *From the watchfulness of Divine Providence for the good of mankind.* Can we conceive that there is a *God* who rules and takes *care* of the *world*, and who to manifest his signal *Love* to *mankind*, should not only *grant* a *Patent* of *Mercy* to the *world*, by his Son *Christ*, and then *sealed* it by *Divine Miracles*, and in order to the certain *conveyance* of it to the *world*, caused it by *persons* imployed by *himself*, to be *recorded* in a *language* fittest for its *dispersing* up and down the *world*, (all which I here suppose:) Can we I say *conceive* that this *God* should so far have *cast* off his *care* of the *world* and the *good* of *mankind*, which was the original *ground* of the *Grant* it self, as to suffer any *wicked men* or *malignant spirits* to *corrupt* or *alter* any of those *Terms* in it, on which men's *eternal salvation* depends; much less wholly to *suppress* and *destroy* it, and to send forth *one* that is *counterfeit* and *supposititious* instead of it, and which should not be *discovered* by the *Christians* of that *age* wherein that *corrupt Copy* was set forth, nor by any of the most *learned* and *inquisitive Christians* ever since. They who can give any the least *entertainment* to so *wild*, *absurd* and *irrational* an *imagination*, are so far from *reason*, that they are in good *disposition* to *Atheism*; and next to the *suspecting* the *Scriptures* to be *corrupted*, they may rationally *suspect* there is no such *thing* as a *God* and *providence* in the world; or that the *world* is *governed* by a *spirit* most *malignant* and *envious* of the *good* of *mankind*. Which is a suspicion only becoming those *Heathens* (among whom it was very frequent) who worshipped the *Devils* instead of *God*

2. *Because of the general dispersion of Copies in the world upon the first publishing of them.* We cannot otherwise conceive, but that *records* containing so *weighty* and *important things*, would be transcribed by all those *Churches* which *believed* the *truth* of the *things* contained in them. We see how far *curiosity* will carry men as to the care of *transcribing ancient MSS.* of old *Authours*, which contain only some *history* of *things* past that are of no great *concernment* to us:

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Can we then imagine those who ventured *estates* and *lives* upon the *truth* of the *things revealed* in *Scripture*, would not be very carefull to preserve the authentick *instrument* whereby they are *revealed* in a certain *way* to the whole world? And *besides* this, for a long time the *originals* themselves of the *Apostolical writings* were preserved in the *Church*; which makes *Tertullian* in his time *appeal* to them. *Age jam qui vo-* *De præscript.*
les curiositatem melius exercere in negotio salutis tuæ; percurre *adv. hæret.*
Ecclesias Apostolicas, apud quas ipsæ adhuc cathedræ Apostolorum *cap 36.*
suis locis præsidentur, apud quas ipsæ authenticæ eorum literæ recitantur, sonantes vocem, & repræsentantes faciem uniuscujusque. Now how was it *possible* that in that time the *Scriptures* could be *corrupted*, when in some of the *Churches* the original *writings* of the *Apostles* were *preserved* in a continual *succession* of *persons* from the *Apostles* themselves, and from these *originals* so many *Copies* were *transcribed*, as were *conveyed* almost all the *world* over, through the large *spread* of the *Christian Churches* at that time? and therefore it is impossible to *conceive* that a *Copy* should be *corrupted* in one *Church*, when it would so speedily be discovered by another; especially considering these three *circumstances*. 1. The innumerable *multitude* of *Copies* which would speedily be *taken*, both considering the *moment* of the *thing*, and the *easiness* of doing it; *God*, probably for that very end, not *loading* the world with *Pandects* and *Codes* of his *Laws*, but contriving the whole *instruments* of man's *salvation* in so *narrow* a *compass*, that it might be easily *preserved* and *transcribed* by such who were passionate *admirers* of the *Scriptures*. 2. The great *numbers* of *learned* and *inquisitive men* who soon sprung up in the *Christian Church*; whose great *care* was to *explain* and *vindicate* the *sacred Scriptures*; can we then *think* that all these *watchmen* should be *asleep* together when the *evil one* came to *sow* his *Tares*, which it is most *unreasonable* to *imagine*, when in the *writings* of all these learned *men*, which were very *many* and *voluminous*, so much of the *Scripture* was *inserted*, that had there been *corruption* in the *Copies* themselves, yet comparing *them* with those *writings*, the *corruptions* would be soon *discovered*? 3. The great *veneration* which all *Christians* had of the *Scripture*, that they *placed* the *hopes* of their *eternal happiness*, upon the *truth* of the *things* contained in

the *Scriptures*? Can we then *think* theſe would ſuffer any *material alteration* to *creep* into theſe *records* without their *obſerving* and *diſcovering* it? Can we now think when all *perſons* are ſo exceeding *carefull* of their *Deeds*, and the *Records* whereon their *eſtates* depend, that the *Chriſtians* who valued not this *world* in compariſon of that to *come*, ſhould ſuffer the *Magna Charta* of that to be *loſt*, *corrupted*, or *imbezzelled away*? Eſpecially conſidering what *care* and *induſtry* was uſed by many *Primitive Chriſtians* to compare *Copies* together, as is evident in *Pantænus*, who brought the *Hebrew Copy* of *Matthew* out of the *Indies* to *Alexandria*, as *Euſebius* tells us: in *Pamphilius* and the *Library* he *erected* at *Cæſarea*, but eſpecially in *Origen*'s admirable *Hexapla*, which were mainly intended for this end.

3. It is impoſſible to conceive a *corruption* of the *Copy* of the *Scriptures*, becauſe of the *great differences* which were all along the ſeveral *ages* of the *Church*, between thoſe who acknowledged the *Scriptures* to be *Divine*. So that if one *party* of them had *foiſted* in, or *taken* out any thing, another *party* was ready to take *notice* of it, and would be *ſure* to tell the *world* of it. And this might be one great *reaſon*, why *God* in his wiſe *providence* might permit ſuch an *increaſe* of *hereſies* in the *Infancy* of the *Church*, *viz.* that thereby *Chriſtians* might be forced to *ſtand* upon their *guard*, and to have a ſpecial *eye* to the *Scriptures*, which were always the great *eye-ſores* of *Hereticks*. And from this great *warineſs* of the *Church* it was that ſome of the *Epiſtles* were ſo long *abroad* before they found general *entertainment* in all the *Churches of Chriſt*, becauſe in thoſe *Epiſtles* which were *doubted* for ſome time, there were ſome *paſſages* which ſeemed to *favour* ſome of the *hereſies* then abroad; but when upon ſevere *enquiry* they are found to be what they *pretended*, they were received in all the *Chriſtian Churches*.

4. Becauſe of the *agreement* between the *Old Teſtament* and the *New*: the *Prophecies* of the *Old Teſtament* appear with their full *accompliſhment* in the *New* which we have; ſo that it is *impoſſible* to *think* the *New* ſhould be *corrupted* unleſs the *Old* were too, which is moſt unreaſonable to imagine, when the *Jews*, who have been the great *conſervators* of the *Old Teſtament*, have been all along the moſt *inveterate enemies* of the

the *Christians*: So that we cannot at all *conceive* it *possible* that any material *corruptions* or *alterations* should *creep* into the *Scriptures*, much less that the true *Copy* should be *lost*, and a *new* one forged.

Supposing then that we have the same *authentick records* preserved and *handed* down to us by the *care* of all *Christian Churches*, which were written in the *first ages* of the *Church of Christ*: what *necessity* can we imagine that *God* should *work new miracles* to confirm that *Doctrine* which is conveyed *down* in a *certain uninterrupted way* to us, as being *sealed* by *miracles* undoubtedly *divine* in the first *promulgation* and *penning* of it? And this is the first *reason* why the *truth* of the *Scriptures* need not now be *sealed* by *new miracles*. 2. Another, may be, because *God* in the *Scripture* hath *appointed* other *things* to continue in his *Church* to be as *seals* to his *people* of the *truth* of the things contained in *Scriptures*. Such are *outwardly*, the *Sacraments* of the *Gospel*, *Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*, which are set *apart* to be as *seals* to *confirm* the *truth* of the *Covenant* on *God's part* towards us in *reference* to the great *promises* contained in it, in reference to *pardon of sin*, and the *ground* of our *acceptance* with *God* by *Jesus Christ*: and *inwardly God* hath promised his *Spirit* to be as a *witness within them*, that by its *working* and *strengthning grace* in the *hearts* of *Believers*, it may *confirm* to them the *truth* of the *records* of *Scripture* when they find the *counter-part* of them *written* in their *hearts* by the *finger* of the *Spirit* of *God*. It cannot then be with any *reason* at all *supposed*, that when a *Divine Testimony* is already *confirmed* by *miracles* undoubtedly *Divine*, that new *miracles* should be *wrought* in the *Church* to assure us of the *truth* of it. So *Chrysostom* fully expresseth himself concerning *miracles*, speaking of the first *ages* of the *Christian Church*: ἡ γὰρ ἡ τότε χρησίμως ἐγίνετο, ἡ νῦν χρησίμως ἂ γίνεται, νῦν ἀπὸ τῶν θείων γεγραφῶν ἡ τῶν τότε σημείων τὴν πίστιν ὧν λέγομεν παρεχόμεθα. *Miracles were very usefull then, and not at all usefull now; for now we manifest the truth of what we speak from the sacred Scriptures, and the miracles wrought in confirmation of them.* Which that *excellent Authour* there fully *manifests* in a *discourse* on this *subject*, *why miracles were necessary in the beginning of the Christian Church, and are not now.* To the same purpose St. *Austin* speaks where he *discourseth* of the *truth*

Sect. 5.

Chrysost. in 1 Cor. 2. *hom.* 6. *p.* 276. *Tom.* 3. *ed. Eton.*

De ver. Relig. cap. 25.

truth of *Religion* *Accepimus majores noſtros viſibilia miracula ſecutos eſſe; per quos id actum eſt ut neceſſaria non eſſent poſteris*; becauſe the world *believed* by the *miracles* which were wrought at the *firſt preaching* of the *Goſpel*, therefore *miracles* are no longer *neceſſary*. For we cannot *conceive* how the *world* ſhould be at firſt *induced* to *believe* without *manifeſt* and *uncontrouled miracles*. For as *Chryſoſtom.* ſpeaks, εἰ σημείων χωρὶς ἔπεισαν, πολλῷ μεῖζον τὸ θαῦμα φαίνεται. *It was the greateſt miracle of all, if the world ſhould believe without miracles.* Which the Poet *Dantes* hath well expreſſed in the twenty-fourth *Canto* of *Paradiſe*. For when the *Apoſtle* is there brought in, asking the *Poet* upon what *account* he took the *Scriptures* of the *Old and New Teſtament to be the word of God*; his anſwer is,

Probatio quæ verum hoc mihi recludit,
Sunt opera, quæ ſecuta ſunt, ad quæ Natura
Non candefecit ferrum unquam aut percuſſit incudem.

i. e. *the evidence of that is the Divine power of miracles which was in thoſe who delivered theſe things to the world.* And when the *Apoſtle* catechiſeth him further, *how he knew thoſe miracles were ſuch as they pretend to be*, viz. *that they were true and divine*; his anſwer is,

Si orbis terræ ſeſe convertit ad Chriſtianiſmum,
Inquiebam ego, ſine miraculis: hoc unum
Eſt tale, ut reliqua non ſint ejus centeſima pars.

i. e. *If the world ſhould be converted to the Chriſtian faith without miracles, this would be ſo great a miracle, that others were not to be compared with it.* I conclude this then, with that known ſaying of St. *Auſtin*; *Quiſquis adhuc prodigia, ut credat,* *De Civit. Dei, l. 22. cap. 8.* *inquiret, magnum eſt ipſe prodigium qui mundo credente non credit. He that ſeeks for miracles ſtill to induce him to faith, when the world is converted to the Chriſtian faith, he needs not ſeek for prodigies abroad; he wants only a looking-glaſs to diſcover one.* For as he goes on, *Unde temporibus eruditis & omne quod fieri non poteſt reſpuentibus, ſine ullis miraculis nimium mirabiliter incredibilia credidit mundus? Whence came it to paſs that in ſo learned and wary an age as that was which the Apoſtles preached*

preached in, the world without miracles should be brought to believe things so strangely incredible as those were which Christ and his Apostles preached? So that by this it *appears* that the *intention* of *miracles* was to confirm a *Divine Testimony* to the world, and to make that appear *credible* which otherwise would have *seemed incredible*; but to what *end* now, when this *Divine Testimony* is *believed* in the *world*, should *miracles* be *continued* among those who *believe* the *Doctrine* to be *Divine*, the *miracles* wrought for the *confirmation* of it to have been *true*, and the *Scriptures* which contain *both*, to be the *undoubted Word of God?* To what *purpose* then the *huge outcry* of *miracles* in the *Roman Church* is, is hard to *conceive*, unless it be to make it *appear* how *ambitious* that *Church* is of being *called* by the name of *him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved.* For had they received the *Love* of the *Truth* of the *Gospel*, they would have *believed* it on the *account* of those *miracles* and *signs* and *wonders* which were wrought for the *confirmation* of it, by *Christ* and his *Apostles*; and not have gone about by their *juglings* and *impostures* instead of *bringing* me to *believe* the *Gospel*, to make them *question* the *truth* of the *first miracles* when they see so many *counterfeits*; had we not great *assurance* the *Apostles* were *men* of other *designs* and *interests* than *Popish Priests* are, and that there is not now any such *necessity* of *miracles*, as there was then when a *Divine Testimony revealing* the *truth* of *Christian Religion* was *confirmed* by them. 2 Thes. 2 9, 10.

Those miracles cannot be Divine, which are done now for the confirmation of any thing contrary to that Divine Testimony, which is confirmed by uncontrouled Divine Miracles. The case is not the same now, which was before the *coming* of *Christ*; for then though the *Law* of *Moses* was *confirmed* by *miracles*; yet though the *doctrine* of *Christ* did null the *obligation* of that *Law*, the *miracles* of *Christ* were to be looked on as *Divine*, because *God* did not *intend* the *Ceremonial Law* to be *perpetual*; and there were many *Prophecies* which could not have their *accomplishment* but under a *new state*: But now under the *Gospel*, *God* hath *declared* this to be the last *revelation* of *Sect.* 6. 2.

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his *mind* and *will* to the *world* by his *Son*, that now the *Prophecies* of the Old *Teſtament* are accompliſhed, and the *Prophecies* of the *New* reſpect only the *various conditions* of the *Chriſtian Church*, without any the leaſt *intimation* of any further *revelation* of God's *mind* and *will* to the *world*: So that now the *Scriptures* are our *adæquate rule* of *faith*, and that according to which we are to *judge* all *pretenders* to *inſpiration* or *miracles*. And according to this rule we are to proceed in any *thing* which is *propounded* to us to *believe* by any *perſons*, upon any *pretences* whatſoever. Under the *Law* after the *eſtabliſhment* of the *Law* its ſelf by the *miracles* of *Moſes*, the *rule* of *judging* all *pretenders* to *miracles*, was by the *worſhip* of the *true God*. *If there ariſe among you a Prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a ſign, or a wonder, and the ſign or the wonder come to paſs, whereof he ſpake to thee, ſaying, Let us go after other Gods (which thou haſt not known) and let us ſerve them: thou ſhalt not hearken unto the words of that Prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your ſoul.* Whereby it is plain, that after the *true doctrine* is confirmed by *Divine miracles*, *God* may give the *Devil* or *falſe Prophets power* to *work*, if not *real miracles*, yet *ſuch* as men cannot *judge* by the *things* themſelves whether they be *real* or *no*; and this *God* may do for the *tryal* of men's *faith*, whether they will *forſake* the *true doctrine* confirmed by greater *miracles* for the *ſake* of ſuch *doctrines* which are *contrary* thereto, and are *confirmed* by falſe *Prophets*, by *ſigns* and *wonders*. Now in this caſe our *rule* of *tryal* muſt not be ſo much the *wonders* conſidered in themſelves whether *real* or *no*, as the *comparing* them with the *miracles* which were *wrought* in *confirmation* of that *doctrine*, which is contrary to *this*, which theſe *wonders* tend to the *proving* of. Therefore *God*'s people under the *Law* were to *examine* the *ſcope* and *drift* of the *miracles*; if they were intended to bring them to *Idolatry*, what-ever they were, they were not to *hearken* to thoſe who did them. So now under the *Goſpel*, as the *worſhip* of the *true God* was then the *ſtandard* whereby to judge of *miracles* by the *Law* of *Moſes*, ſo the *worſhip* of the true *God* through *Jeſus Chriſt*, and by the *doctrine revealed* by him, is the *ſtandard* whereby we ought to *judge* of all *pretenders*

Deut. 13. 1, 2, 3.

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to *work miracles*. So that let the *miracles* be what they *will*, if they *contradict* that *doctrine* which *Christ* revealed to the world, we are to look upon *them* as only *tryals* of our *faith* in *Christ*, to see whether we *love him with our whole hearts or no*. And therefore I think it *needless* to *examine* all the particulars of *Lipsius* his *relations* of *miracles* wrought by his *Diva Virgo Hallensis* and *Asprecollis*; for if I see, that their *intention* and *scope* is to set up the *worship* of *Dæmons*, or a middle *sort* of *Deities* between *God* and *us*, which the *Scripture* is *ignorant* of, on that very *account* I am *bound* to *reject them* all. Although I think it very *possible* to find out the *difference* between *true miracles*, and *them*, in the *manner* and *circumstances* of their *operation*; but this, as it is of more *curiosity*, so of less *necessity*; for if the *doctrine* of the *Scriptures* was *confirmed* by *miracles infinitely* above these, I am *bound* to *adhere* to that, and not to *believe* any other *doctrine*, *though an Angel from Heaven should preach it*, much less, although some *Popish Priests* may *boast* much of *miracles* to *confirm* a *doctrine opposite* to the *Gospel*: which I know not how far *God* may in judgment give those *images power* to *work*, or others *faith* to *believe*, because they would not receive the *truth* in the love of it: and these are now those τέρατα ψεύδους, *lying* wonders which the *Scripture* fore-warns us that we should not *believe*, *viz.* such as lead *men* to the *belief* of *lyes*, or of *doctrines*, contrary to that of the *Gospel* of *Jesus Christ*. 2 Thes. 2. 9.

Where miracles are true and divine, there the effects which follow them upon the minds of those who believe them, are true and divine, i. e. the effect of believing of them, is the drawing of men from *sin* unto *God*. This the *Primitive Christians* insisted much upon, as an *undoubted evidence* that the *miracles* of *Christ* were wrought by a *Divine Power*, because the *effect* which followed them, *was the work of conversion of souls from sin and Idols to God and Christ, and all true piety and vertue*. As the *effect* of the *miracles* of *Moses* was the *drawing* a *people* off from *Superstition* and *Idolatry* to the *worship* of the *true God*; so the *effect* which followed the *belief* of the *miracles* of *Christ* in the *world* was the *purging* men's *souls* from all *sin* and *wickedness to make them new creatures*, and to *live* in all *exactness* and *holiness* of *conversation*. And thereby *Ori-* Sect. 7. 3.

Lib. 2. *c. Celſ.* gen diſcovers the great *difference* between the *miracles* of *Chriſt* and *Antichriſt*, that the *intent* of all *Antichriſt's wonders was to bring men* εἰς ἀνδρλω ἀδικίας, *to the deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs whereby to deſtroy them*; *but the intent of the miracles of Chriſt was* οὐκ ἀπάτη ἀλλὰ σωτηρία ψυχῶν, *not the deceiving but the ſaving of ſouls*; τίς γὰρ ἂν πρόφασιν βίου ἐκ συλλογιστικῆς τῆς ψυχῆς ὀσμίσεως ἔχοι τὸ ἄλλοθεν, εὐλόγως φησὶν ἀπὸ ἀπάτης γίνεσθαι; *who can with any probability ſay that reformation of life and daily progreſs from evil to good ſhould be the effect of mere deceit?* And therefore he ſaith, *Chriſt told his Diſciples that they ſhould do greater works than he had done*; *becauſe by their Preaching and Miracles the eyes of blind ſouls are opened, and the ears of ſuch as were deaf to all goodneſs are opened ſo far as to hearken to the Precepts and Promiſes of the Goſpel: and the feet of thoſe who were lame in their inward man, are ſo healed as to delight to run in the ways of God's Commandments.* Now is it poſſible that theſe ſhould be the *effects* of any *evil ſpirit?* But on the contrary we ſee the *effects* of all *Impoſtors*, and pretended *miracles* wrought by *Diabolical power* was to bring *men* off from *God* to *ſin*, and to *diſſolve* that ſtrict *obligation* to *duty* which was laid upon men by the *Goſpel* of *Chriſt*. Thus it was in that early *ape* of the *Apoſtles*, *Simon Magus*, who far outwent *Apollonius Tyaneus* or any other *Heathen* in his pretended *miracles*, according to the *report* which is given of him by the *Primitive Chriſtians*; but we ſee the *intent* of his *miracles* was to raiſe an *admiration* of *himſelf*, and to bring *men* off from all *holineſs* of *converſation*, by aſſerting among other *damnable hereſies*, that *God* did not at all *regard what men did, but only what they believed:* wherein the *Gnoſticks* were his *followers*. Now when *miracles* are wrought to be *Patrons* of *ſin*, we may eaſily know from *whom* they come.

V. Grot. in 2 Theſ. 2. 9. *in opuſc.*

Sect. 8. 4. *Thoſe miracles are wrought by a Divine power which tend to the overthrow of the Kingdom of Satan in the world.* This is evident from hence, becauſe all ſuch *things* as are out of *man's power* to effect, muſt either be done by a power *Divine* or *Diabolical:* For as our *Saviour* argues, *Every Kingdom divided againſt its ſelf is brought to deſolation, and every City or Houſe divided againſt its ſelf cannot ſtand; and if Satan caſt out Satan, he is divided againſt himſelf, how ſhall then his Kingdom ſtand?* Now *Chriſt* by his *miracles* did not only *diſpoſſeſs*

Mat. 12 25, 26.

Satan

Satan out of men's *bodies*, but out of his *Temples* too, as hath been shewn already. And besides the *Doctrine* of *Christ* which was confirmed by those *miracles*, was in every thing directly contrary to the *Devil's design*, in the World. For, 1. The *Devil*'s design was to *conceal himself* among *those who worshipped* him; the *design* of the *Gospel* was to *discover* him *whom* the *Gentiles* worshipped, to be an *evil* and *malignant spirit*, that *designed* nothing but their *ruine*. Now it appears in the *whole history* of *Gentilism*, the grand *mystery* of *State* which the *Devil* used among the *Heathens* was to make *himself* to be *taken* and *worshipped* for *God*, and to make them *believe* that their *Dæmons* were very *good* and *benign spirits*; which made the *Platonists* and other *Philosophers* so much *incensed* against the Primitive *Christians*, when they *declared* their *Dæmons* to be nothing else but *infernal* and *wicked spirits* which sought the *destruction* of *souls*.

2. The *Devil's great design was to draw men to the practice of the greatest wickedness under a pretence of Religion*; as is very *observable* in all the *Heathen mysteries*, which the more *recondite* and *hidden* they were, *the greater wickedness* lay at the *bottom* of *them*, and so were to *purpose mysteries of iniquity*; but now the *design* of the *Gospel* was to *promote* the greatest *purity* both of *heart* and *life*; There being in no other *Religion* in the *world* either such *incomparable Precepts* of *holiness*, or such *incouraging Promises* to the *practice* of it (from *eternal life* hereafter as the *reward*, and the *assistance* of *God's spirit* to *help* men here) or such *prevailing motives* to *persuade* men to it from the *love of God in Christ to the World*, the *undertakings of Christ for us* in his *death* and *sufferings*, the *excellent pattern* we have to *follow* in our *Saviour's own example*; now these *things* make it plain that the *design* of *Christ* and the *Devil* are diametrically *opposite* to each other. 3. The *design* of the *Devil* is to set *God and mankind at the greatest distance from each other*; the *design* of *Christ* in the *Gospel* is to *bring them nearer together*. The *Devil* first *tempts* to *sin*, and then for *sin*; he makes men *presume* to *sin*, and to *despair* because they have *sinned*. *Christ* first *keeps* men from *sin*, by his *Precepts* and *Threatnings*, and then supposing *sin*, incourageth *them* to *repent* with *hopes* of *pardon* procured by *himself* for all truly *penitent* and *believing sinners*. Thus in every *thing*

the *design* of *Christ* and the *Devil* are contrary, which makes it *evident* that the *miracles* wrought in *confirmation* of the *doctrine* of *Christ* could be from no *evil spirit*, and therefore must be from a *truly Divine Power.*

Sect. 9. 5. *True and Divine Miracles may be known and distinguished from false and diabolical, from the circumstances, or the manner of their operation.* There were some peculiar *signatures* on the *miracles* of *Christ* which are not to be found in any wrought by a power less than Divine. Which *Arnobius* well expresseth in these words to the *Heathens. Potestis aliquem nobis designare, monstrare ex omnibus illis Magis qui unquam fuere per secula, consimile aliquid Christo millesima ex parte qui fecerit? qui sine ulla vi carminum, sine herbarum aut graminum succis, sine ulla aliqua observatione sollicita sacrorum, libaminum, temporum? —— Atqui constitit Christum sine ullis adminiculis rerum, sine ullius ritus observatione, vel lege, omnia illa quæ fecit, nominis sui possibilitate fecisse, & quod proprium, consentaneum, Deo dignum fuerat vero, nihil nocens aut noxium, sed opiferum, sed salutare, sed auxiliaribus plenum bonis potestatis munificæ liberalitate donasse?* He challengeth the *Heathens* to produce any one of all their *Magicians* who did the thousandth *part* of what our *Saviour* did: who made *use* of none of their *Magical rites* and *observations* in what-ever he *did*; and what-ever he did was *merely* by his own *power*, and was withall most becoming *God*; and most *beneficial* to the *world.* And thence he proceeds to answer the *Heathens* about the *miracles* wrought by their *Gods*, which fell *short* of those of *Christ* in three main particulars, the *manner* of their *working*, and the *number* of them, and the *quality of the things done.*

Arnob. c. gentes l. 1. pag 25, 26, &c.

1. *The manner of their working*; What they did was with a great deal of *pomp* and *ceremony*; what *Christ* did was with a *word speaking*, and sometimes without it by the *touch of his garment: Non inquiro, non exigo*, saith he, *quis Deus, aut quo tempore, cui fuerit auxiliatus, aut quem fractum restituerit sanitati; illud solum audire desidero, an sine ullius adjunctione materiæ*, i. e. *medicaminis alicujus ad tactum morbos jusserit ab hominibus evolare, imperaverit, fecerit, & emori valetudinum causam, & debilium corpora ad suas remeare naturas. Omitting all other circumstances, name me*, saith he, *but which of your Gods*

Gods ever cured a disease without any adjoyned matter, some prescriptions or other; or which of them ever commanded diseases out of bodies by their mere touch, and quite removed the cause of the distempers. Æsculapius, he says, *cured diseases*, but in the *way* that ordinary *Physicians* do, by *prescribing something*, or other, to be done by the *patients*. *Nulla autem virtus est medicaminibus amovere quæ noceant; beneficia ista rerum, non sunt curantium potestates. To cure diseases by prescriptions argues no power at all in the prescriber, but vertue in the medicine.*

2. *In the number of the persons cured:* they were very *few* which were *cured* in the *Heathen Temples*; *Christ* cured whole *multitudes*, and that not in the *vestries* of the *Temples* where *fraud* and *imposture* might be easily suspected, but in the *presence* of the people who *brought* to him all manner of *persons sick* of all sorts of *diseases*, which were *cured* by him; and these so *numerous*, that the *Evangelist* who *records* many of *Christ's miracles* which had been *omitted* by the *others*, yet tells us at last, the *miracles of Christ* were so many, *that the whole world would not contain them.* But now *Arnobius* tells the *Heathens*, *Quid prodest ostendere unum aut alterum fortasse curatos, cum tot millibus subvenerit nemo, & plena sint omnia miserorum infeliciumque delubra? What matter is it to shew one or two cured, when thousands lie continually in the Temples perishing for want of cure?* yea *such* as did *Æsculapium ipsum precibus fatigare, & invitare miserrimis votis*, that could not beg a cure of *Æsculapius* with all their *earnestness* and *importunity*. Joh. 21. 25.

3. In the *quality of the diseases cured*; the *cures* among the *Heathens* were some slight things in comparison of those *performed* by *Christ*; the most *acute*, the most *Chronical*, the most *malignant* of *diseases*, cured by a *touch*, a *word*, a *thought*. A learned *Physician* hath undertaken to make it *evident* from the *circumstances* of the *story*, and from the received *principles* among the most *authentick Physicians*, that the *diseases* cured by our *Saviour* were all incurable by the *rules* of *Physick*; if so, the greater the *power* of our *Saviour*, who *cured* them with so much *facility* as he did. And he not only cured all *diseases* himself, but *gave a power* to others, who were not at all *versed* in *matters* of *art* and *subtilty*, that they should do *Gul. Ader. de morbis Evangel.*

do *miracles* likewise *sine fucis & adminiculis, without any fraud or assistance: quid dicitis O mentes incredulæ, difficiles, duræ! olicuine mortalium Jupiter ille Capitolinus hujusmodi potestatem dedit?* when did ever the great *Jupiter Capitolinus give a power of working miracles to any? I do not say*, saith he, *of raising the dead, or curing the blind, or healing the lame, sed ut pustulam, reduviam, populam, aut vocis Imperio aut manus contrectatione comprimeret: but to cure a wart, a pimple, any the most trivial thing, with a word speaking, or the touch of the hand.* Upon this *Arnobius* challengeth the most famous of all the *Heathen Magicians, Zoroastres, Armenius, Pamphilus, Apollonius, Damigero, Dardanus, Velus, Julianus*, and *Bæbulus*, or any other renowned *Magician* to give *power* to any one to make the *dumb* to *speak*, the *deaf* to *hear*, the *blind* to *see*, or bring *life* into *a dead body*. Or if this be too hard, with all their *Magical Rites* and *Incantations*, but to do that, *quod à rusticis Christianis jussionibus factitatum est nudis, which ordinary Christians do by their mere words:* So great a *difference* was there between the *highest* that could be done by *Magick*, and the *least* that was done by the *Name* and *Power of Christ*.

Sect. 10 6. *Where Miracles are truly Divine, God makes it evident to all Impartial judgments that the things done exceed all created power.* For which purpose we are to *observe* that though *Impostures* and *Delusions* may go far, the *Power* of *Magicians further* when *God* permits them; yet when *God* works *Miracles* to confirm a *Divine Testimony*, he makes it evident that his *Power* doth infinitely *exceed* them all. This is most *conspicuous*, in the *case* of *Moses* and our blessed *Saviour*. First *Moses*, he began to do some *miracles* in the *presence* of *Pharaoh* and the *Ægyptians, turning his Rod into a Serpent*; but we do not find *Pharaoh* at all amazed at it, but sends *presently* for the *Magicians* to do the *same*, who did it (whether *really* or only in *appearance*, is not *material* to our purpose,) but *Aaron's rod swallowed up theirs*. The next time *the waters are turned into blood* by *Moses, the Magicians they do so too*. After this, *Moses brings up Frogs upon the Land, so do the Magicians*. So that here now is a *plain* and *open contest* in the *presence* of *Pharaoh* and his *people*, between *Moses* and the *Magicians*, and they *try* for *victory* over each other; so that

Exod. 7. 10, 12. Exod. 8. 19, 22. 8. 6, 7.

that if *Moses* do no *more* than they, they would *look* upon him but as a *Magician*; but if *Moses* do that which by the acknowledgment of these *Magicians* themselves could be only by *Divine Power*, then it is *demonstrably* evident that his *Power* was as far above the power of *Magick* as *God* is above the *Devil*. Accordingly we find it in the very next *miracle* in *turning the dust into Cinipbes* (which we render) *lice*, *the Magicians* are *non-plust*, and give out, saying in plain terms, *This is the finger of God*. And what greater *acknowledgment* can 8. 19.
there be of *Divine Power* than the *confession* of those who seemed to *contest* with it, and to *imitate* it as much as possible? After this we find not the *Magicians* offering to contest with *Moses*, and in the plague of *boyls* we particularly read *that they could not stand before Moses*. Thus we see in the 9. 11.
case of *Moses* how evident it was that there was a *power* above all *power* of *Magick* which did appear in *Moses*. And so likewise in the case of our blessed *Saviour*; for although *Simon Magus*, *Apollonius*, or others, might do some *small things*, or make some great *shew* and *noise* by what they did; yet none of them ever came *near* the *doing things* of the same *kind* which our *Saviour* did, curing *the born blind*, *restoring the dead to life after four days*, and so as to live a considerable *time* after; or in the *manner he did them*, *with a word*, *a touch*, with that *frequency* and *openness* before his greatest *enemies* as well as *followers*, and in such an *uncontrouled manner*, that neither *Jews* or *Heathens*, ever *questioned* the *truth* of them. And after all these, when he was laid in the *grave* after his *crucifixion*, exactly according to his own *prediction*, he *rose* again the third *day*, appeared *frequently* among his *Disciples* for forty *days* together. After which, in their presence, he *ascended up to Heaven*, and soon after, made good his *promise* to them, *by sending his Holy Spirit upon them*, by which they spake with *tongues*, wrought *miracles*, went *up and down Preaching* the *Gospel* of *Christ* with great *boldness*, *chearfulness*, and *constancy*, and after undergoing a great deal of *hardship* in it, they *sealed* the truth of *all* they *spake* with their *blood*, laying down their *lives* to give *witness* to it. Thus *abundantly* to the *satisfaction* of the *minds* of all good *men* hath *God* given the highest *rational evidence* of the *truth* of the *Doctrine* which he hath revealed to the World. And thus I have

have finiſhed the *ſecond part* of my task, which concerned the *rational evidence* of the *truth* of *Divine Revelation* from the perſons who were imployed to deliver *God's mind* to the World: And therein have, I hope, made it evident that both *Moſes* and the *Prophets*, our *Saviour* and his *Apoſtles*, did come with ſufficient *rational evidence* to convince the *world* that they were *perſons* immediately ſent from *God*.

BOOK

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

Of the Being of God.

The Principles of all Religion lie in the Being of God and Immortality of the soul: from them the necessity of a particular divine revelation rationally deduced; the method laid down for proving the divine Authority of the Scriptures. Why Moses *doth not prove the Being of God, but suppose it. The notion of a Deity very consonant to reason. Of the nature of* Idea's, *and particularly of the* Idea *of God. How we can form an* Idea *of an infinite Being. How far such an* Idea *argues existence. The great unreasonableness of Atheism demonstrated. Of the Hypotheses of the Aristotelian and Epicurean Atheists. The Atheists pretences examined and refuted. Of the nature of the arguments whereby we prove there is a God. Of universal consent and the evidence of that to prove a Deity and Immortality of souls. Of necessity of existence implied in the notion of God, and how far that proves the Being of God. The order of the world and usefulness of the parts of it, and especially of man's body an argument of a Deity. Some higher principle proved to be in the world than matter and motion. The Nature of the soul, and possibility of its subsisting after death. Strange appearances in Nature not solvable by the power of imagination.*

HAving in the precedent Book largely given a *rational account* of the *grounds* of our *faith*, as to the *persons* whom *God* imploys to reveal his *mind* to the world; if we can now make it appear that those *sacred records* which *Sect.* 1.

we embrace as *divinely inſpired*, contain in them nothing *unworthy* of ſo *great* a *name*, or unbecoming *perſons* ſent from *God* to *deliver*; there will be nothing wanting to juſtifie our *Religion* in point of *reaſon* to be *true*, and of *revelation* to be *divine*. For the *Scriptures themſelves* coming to us in the *name* of *God*, we are bound to *believe* them to be ſuch as they *pretend* to be, unleſs we have *ground* to *queſtion* the general *foundations* of all *religion* as *uncertain*, or this *particular* way of *religion* as not *ſuitable* to thoſe general *foundations*. The *foundations* of all *religion* lie in *two* things; *that there is a God* who rules the world, and that the *ſouls of men are capable of* Heb. 11. 6. *ſubſiſting after death*; *for he that comes unto God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that ſeek him*; ſo that if theſe *things* be not ſuppoſed as moſt *agreeable* to *humane reaſon*, we cannot imagine upon what *grounds* mankind ſhould *embrace* any way of *religion* at all. For if there be not a *God* whom I am to *ſerve* and *obey*, and if I have not a *ſoul* of an *immortal* nature, there can be no ſufficient *obligation* to *religion*, nor *motive* inducing to it: For all *obligation* to *obedience* muſt *ſuppoſe* the *exiſtence* of ſuch a *Being* which hath *power* to *command* me; and by reaſon of the promiſcuous *ſcatterings* of *good* and *evil* in this life, the *motives* engaging men to the *practice* of *religion*, muſt ſuppoſe the *certainty* of a *future ſtate*. If theſe *things* be *ſure*, and the *foundations* of *religion* in general thereby firmly *eſtabliſhed*, it will preſently follow as a *matter* moſt agreeable to *reaſon*, that the *God* whom we are to ſerve ſhould himſelf *preſcribe* the *way* of his own *worſhip*; and if the *right* of *donation* of that *happineſs* which mens *ſouls* are capable of be alone in himſelf, that he alone ſhould *declare* the *terms* on which it may be *expected*; For *man* being a *creature* endued with a free *principle* of *acting*, which he is conſcious to himſelf of, and therefore not being *carried* to his end by *neceſſity* of *nature* or *external violence*, without the *concurrence* of his own *reaſon* and *choice*, we muſt ſuppoſe this *happineſs* to *depend* upon the *performance* of ſome *conditions* on man's part, whereby he may demonſtrate that it is the *matter* of his free *choice*, and that he freely quits all other *intereſts* that he might obtain the *enjoyment* of it. Which *conditions* to be performed, being *expreſſions* of man's *obedience* towards *God* as his *Creator* and *Governour*, and of his *gratitude* for the *tenders* of ſo great a *happineſs*

pineſs which is the *free gift* of his *Maker*, we cannot ſuppoſe any one to have *power* to *preſcribe* theſe *conditions*, but he that hath *power* likewiſe to *deprive* the *ſoul* of her *happineſs* upon *nonperformance*, and that muſt be *God* himſelf. But in order to man's *underſtanding* his *duty*, and his *obligation* to *obedience*, it is neceſſary that theſe *conditions* muſt not be *locked* up in the *Cabinet Council* of *Heaven*, but muſt be ſo far *declared* and *revealed*, that he may be fully acquainted with thoſe *terms* which his *happineſs* depends upon; elſe his *neglect* of them would be *excuſable*, and his *miſery unavoidable*. Had man indeed remained without offending his Maker, he might ſtill have ſtood in his *favour* upon the general *terms* of *obedience* due from the *creature* to his *Creator*, and to all ſuch particular *precepts* which ſhould bear the *impreſs* of his Maker's will upon them, beſide which, the whole *volume* of the *Creation*, without, and his own *reaſon* within would have been ſufficient *directors* to him in the *performance* of his duty. But he abuſing his *liberty*, and being thereby guilty of *Apoſtaſie* from *God* (as is evident by a continued propenſity to ſin, and the ſtrangeneſs between *God* and the *ſouls* of men) a particular *revelation* is now become *neceſſary*, that *mankind* may thereby underſtand on what terms *God* will be pleaſed again, and by what means they may be reſtored into his *favour*. And *laſtly*, it not agreeing with the *free* and *communicative* nature of *divine goodneſs* (which was the firſt *original* of the world's *Creation*) to ſuffer all *mankind* to periſh in their own *folly*, we muſt ſuppoſe this way for man's *recovery* to be ſomewhere *preſcribed*, and the *revelation* of it to be ſomewhere *extant* in the world. So that from the general *principles* of the *exiſtence* of *God*, and *immortality* of the *ſoul*, we have deduced by clear and evident *reaſon* the *neceſſity* of ſome particular *divine revelation*, as the *ſtandard* and *meaſure* of *Religion*. And according to theſe *principles* we muſt examine whatever pretends to be of *divine revelation*; for it muſt be *ſuitable* to that *divine nature* from whom it is ſuppoſed to come, and it muſt be *agreeable* to the *conditions* of the *ſouls* of men, and therefore that which carries with it the greateſt evidence of *divine revelation*, is, a *faithfull repreſentation* of the *ſtate* of the *caſe* between *God* and the *ſouls* of men, and a *divine diſcovery* of thoſe *ways* whereby men's *ſouls* may be fitted for eternal *happineſs*. A *divine revelation* then muſt be

faithfull and *true* in all its *narrations*; it must be *excellent* and *becoming God* in all its *discoveries*. And therefore all that can with any *reason* be desired for *proof* of the *divine authority* of the *Scriptures*, will lie in these three things. First, *That the foundations of religion are of undoubted certainty, or that there is a God, and that mens souls are immortal.* Secondly, *That the Scriptures do most faithfully relate the matters of greatest antiquity therein contained* (which do most concern the *History* of the breach between *God* and *man.*) Thirdly, *That the Scriptures are the only authentick records of those terms on which happiness may be expected in another world.*

Sect. 2. I begin with the *first* of them, which concerns the *existence* of *God*, and *immortality* of the *soul*; both which seem to be supposed as general *Prolepses* in the *writings* of *Moses*, and as *things* so consonant to *humane nature*, that none to whom his *writings* should come could be *supposed* to *question* them. And therefore he spends no time in the *operose proving* of either of these, knowing to how little purpose his writings would be to such who denyed these first *principles* of all *religion.* But beside this, there may be these accounts given, why these main *foundations* of all *religion* are no more insisted on in the first *Books* of the *Scripture*, which contain the *originals* of the *world.* First, *Because these were in the time of the writing of them, believed with an universal consent of mankind.* In those more early *days* of the *world*, when the *tradition* of the first *ages* of it was more *fresh* and *entire*, it is scarce *imaginable* that men should question the *Being* of a *God*; when the *history* of the *flood*, and the *propagation* of the *world* after it by the *Sons* of *Noah*, and the *burning* of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* were so *fresh* in their *memories*, as having been done so few *Generations* before them. And by what remains of any *history* of other *Nations* in those elder times men were so far from *Atheism*, that *Polytheism* and *Idolatry* were the common practice of the world, as is most evident in all *relations* of the ancient *Chaldeans*, *Ægyptians*, *Phœnicians*, and other Nations, who all supposed these two *principles*, as well as those who served the *true God.* And in all *probability*, as men are apt to run from one extreme to another, *Polytheism* was the first occasion of *Atheism*, and *Idolatry* of *Irreligion.* And thence we find the first appearance of *Atheists* to be in the most blind and superstitious *age* of *Greece*, when the *obscene*

Poets

Poets had so *debauched* the common *understandings* of the *people*, as to make them *believe* such things concerning their *Gods*, which were so *incongruous* to humane *nature*, that all who had any sense of *goodness* left, could not but *loath* and *abhor* such *Deities*. And therefore we find all the *flouts* and *jeers* of the reputed *Atheists* among them, such as *Dionysius*, *Diagoras*, *Theodorus*, *Euhemerus*, *Messenius* and others, were cast upon their venerable *Deities*, which they so solemnly worshipped, who had been before as *Euhemerus* plainly told them, poor *mortal* men, and those not of the best *reputation* neither: and therefore as the *Epicurean* in *Tully* well says, *omnis eorum cultus esset in luctu*, the most suitable *devotion* for them had been *lamenting* their *death*. Now when these common *Deities* were so much *derided* by intelligent men, and yet the *order* of the *world* seemed to tell them there was really a *God*, though *those* were *none*; those who had *Philosophical wits*, such as *Democritus* and *Epicurus* set themselves to work to see if they could *solve* the *Phænomena* of *nature* without a *Deity*; and therefore asserted the *origin* of the *universe* to be only by a *fortuitous concourse* of *infinite little particles*; but herein they *befooled* themselves and their greedy *followers*, who were glad to be rid of those *anxieties* of *mind* which the *thoughts* of a *Deity* and an *immortal soul* did cause within them. And although *Lucretius* in a *bravado* tells us of his *Master*, *that when mens minds were sunk under the burden of Religion*,

De Nat. Deor. l. 1. cap. 38.

Humana ante oculos fœdè cum vita jaceret
In terris oppressa gravi sub religione:
Primum Graius homo mortales tollere contra
Est oculos ausus, primusque obsistere contra.

De rerum Nat. lib. 1.

That Epicurus was the first true Gyant who durst encounter the Gods, and if we believe him, *overthrew them in open field*;

Quare religio pedibus subjecta vicissim
Obteritur, nos exæquat victoria cælo.

Yet *Cotta* in *Tully* reports the *issue* of this *battle* quite otherwise; for although the greatest *triumph* in this victory had been only to become like the *beasts* that *perish*; yet if we believe

lieve *Cotta*, *Epicurus* was ſo far from gaining any of his beloved *eaſe* and *pleaſure* by his *ſentiments*, that never was *School-boy* more afraid of a *Rod*, nor did any *enemy* more *dread* a *Conqueror*, than *Epicurus* did the *thoughts* of a *God* and *death*. *Nec quenquam vidi qui magis ea quæ timenda eſſe negaret, timeret; mortem dico & Deos.* So hard it is for an *Epicurean* even after he hath *proſtituted* his *conſcience*, to *ſilence* it; but (whatever there be in the *air*) there is an *Elaſtical power* in *conſcience* that will bear its ſelf up notwithſtanding the *weight* that is laid upon it. And yet after all the labours of *Epicurus*, he knew it was to no purpoſe to *endeavour* to *root* out wholly the *belief* of a *Deity* out of the world, becauſe of the unanimous *conſent* of the *world* in it; and therefore he admits of it as a neceſſary *Prolepſis* or *Anticipation* of *humane nature*, *quod in omnium animis deorum notionem impreſſiſſet ipſa natura*, that *nature* its ſelf had *ſtamped* an *Idea* of *God* upon the minds of men; *cum enim non inſtituto aliquo, aut more aut lege ſit opinio conſtituta, maneatque ad unum omnium firma conſenſio, intelligi neceſſe eſt Deos eſſe, quoniam inſitas eorum, vel potius innatas cognitiones habemus; de quo autem omnium natura conſentit, id verum eſſe neceſſe eſt*, as *Velleius* the *Epicurean* argues. Since the *belief* of a *Deity*, neither *riſes* from *cuſtom* nor was *enacted* by *Law*, yet is unanimouſly *aſſented* to by all *mankind*; it neceſſarily *follows* that there muſt be a *Deity*, becauſe the *Idea* of it is ſo *natural* to us. If it were thus *acknowledged* in the *Philoſophical age* of *Greece*, when men bent their wits to *unſettle* the *Belief* of ſuch things as tended to *Religion*; how much more might it be eſteemed a general *principle* of humane *nature* in thoſe elder times, when not ſo much as one *diſſenter* appeared that we read of among the more antient Nations? But *Secondly*, it was leſs needful for *Moſes* to inſiſt much on the *proof* of a *Deity* in his *writings*, when his very imployment, and the *hiſtory* he wrote, was the greateſt *evidence* that there was one. Could any of them queſtion, whether there were a *God*, or no, who had heard his *voice* at mount *Sinai*, and had received a *Law* from him, who had been preſent at ſo many *miracles* which were done by *Moſes* in *Ægypt* and the *Wilderneſs*? What more evident *demonſtration* of *God* could be deſired, than thoſe many unparallell'd *miracles*, which were wrought among them?

De Nat. Deor. lib. 1. cap. 86.

De Nat. Deor. lib. 1. cap. 44.

And

And those who would not be convinced by them that there was a *God*, would certainly be convinced by nothing. *Thirdly*, It was unsuitable to the *purpose* of *Moses* to go about to *prove* any thing he delivered by the mere *force of humane reason*, because he writ as a person imployed by *God*; and therefore by the *Arguments* on which they were to believe his *Testimony* in whatever he writ, they could not but believe there was a *God* that imployed him. And from hence it is that *Moses* with so much *Majesty* and *Authority* begins the *History* of the *Creation*, with, *In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth.* There could be no greater *evidence* that there was an infinitely *wise*, *good*, and *powerful God*, than that the *Universe* was produced out of *nothing* by him; and what reason could there be to *distrust* his *Testimony* who relates it, who manifested not only that there was a *God*, but that he was imployed by him, by the *miracles* which he wrought? so that all our former *discourse* concerning the *evidences* of *Divine revelation*, are a most palpable *demonstration* of a *Deity*; for if there be such a *power* which can alter the *course* of *nature* when he pleases, the *Being* wherein it is, must needs be *infinite*; which is the same which we mean by *God*.

But yet for those whose *minds* are so *coy* and *squeamish* as to any thing of *Divine revelation*, we want not sufficient *evidence* in point of *reason* to prove to them the *existence* of a *Deity*. In order to which, I shall clear these following propositions. *Sect.* 3.

1. *That the true notion of a Deity is most agreeable to the faculties of mens souls, and most consonant to reason and the light of nature.*

2. *That those who will not believe that there is a God, do believe other things on far less reason, and must by their own principles deny some things which are apparently true.*

3. *That we have a certain evidence that there is a God, as it is possible for us to have, considering his nature.*

That the true notion of God is most agreeable to the faculties of mens souls, and most consonant to reason and the light of nature: i. e. that the *Idea* of *God* (or that which we conceive in our minds when we think of *God*) is so far from being any ways *repugnant* to any *principle* of *reason* within us, that it is *hard* to pitch on any other *notion* which hath fewer *Prop.* 1.

entangle-

entanglements in it, to a mind ſo far *Metaphyſical* as to *abſtract* from *ſence* and *prejudice*. I grant it very *difficult*, nay *impoſſible*, for thoſe to have any true ſetled *notion* of a *God*, who ſearch for an *Idea* of him in their *fancies*, and were never *conſcious* to themſelves of any higher *faculty* in their *ſouls* than mere *imagination*. Such may have *imaginem Jovis*, or *galeatæ Minervæ*, as he in *Tully* ſpeaks, ſome *Idea* of an *Idol* in their *minds*, but none of a *true God*. For we may as ſoon come by the *ſight* of *colours* to *underſtand* the *nature* of *ſounds*, as by any *corporal phantaſms* come to have a true *Idea* of *God*. And although ſometimes an *Idea* be taken for that *impreſſion* of things which is lodged in the *Phantaſie*, yet here we take it in a more general ſence, as it contains the *repreſentation* of any *thing* in the *mind*; as it is commonly ſaid in the Schools that the *Divine Intellect* doth underſtand things by their *Idea's*, which are nothing elſe but the *things* themſelves as they are *objectively repreſented* to the *underſtanding*. So that an *Idea* in its general ſence in which we take it; is nothing elſe but the *objective being* of a thing as it *terminates* the *underſtanding*, and is the *form* of the act of *Intellection*: that which is then immediately *repreſented* to the mind in its *perception* of things, is the *Idea* or *notion* of it. Now ſuch an *Idea* as this is, may be either *true* or *falſe*. For better *underſtanding* of which we muſt conſider that an *Idea* in the *ſoul* may be conſidered *two* ways. 1. As it is a *mode* of *cogitation*, or the *act* of the *ſoul apprehending* an *object*; now this way no *Idea* can be *falſe*; for as it is an *act* of the *mind*, every *Idea* hath its *truth*: for whether I *imagine* a *golden mountain*, or *another*, it matters not here; for the one *Idea* is as *true* as the *other*, conſidering it *merely* as an *act* of the *mind*. For the *mind* is as really *imployed* about the *one* as the *other*; as the *will* is about an *object* whether it be *feaſible* or *no*. 2. The *Idea* may be conſidered in regard of its *objective reality*, or as it repreſents ſome *outward object*; now the *truth* or *falſhood* of the *Idea* lies in the underſtanding paſſing *judgment* concerning the *outward object*, as *exiſtent*, which doth *correſpond* to the *Idea* which is in the mind. And the *proneneſs* of the *underſtandings* error in this caſe ariſeth from the different *nature* of thoſe *things* which are repreſented to the *mind*; for ſome of them are general and *abſtracted* things

things, and do not at all suppose *existence*, as the *nature* of *truth*, of a *Being*, of *cogitation*; other *Idea's* depend upon *existence* supposed, as the *Idea* of the *Sun*, which I apprehend in my mind because I have seen it; but besides these, there are other *Idea's* in the *mind*, which the *understanding* forms within its self by its own *power*, as it is a *principle* of *cogitation*; such are those which are called *entia rationis*, and have no other *existence* at all but only in the *understanding*, as *Chimæra's*, *Centaures*, &c. Now as to these, we are to observe, that although the *composition* of these *things* together by the *understanding*, be that which makes these *Idea's* to be only *fictitious*, yet the *understanding* would not be able to *compound* such things, were they not severally *represented* to the *mind*; as unless we had known what a *horse* and a *man* had been, our minds could not have *conjoyned* them together in its apprehension. So that in these which are the most *fictitious Idea's*, we see, that although the *Idea* its self be a mere *creature* of the understanding, yet the *mind* could not form such an *Idea* but upon *pre-existent* matter, and some *objective reality* must be supposed in order to the *intellectual conception* of these *Anomalous entities*. By which we see that that strange kind of *omnipotency* which some have attributed to the *understanding*, lies not in a *Power* of conceiving things wholly *impossible*, or fansying *Idea's* of absolute *non-entities*, but in a kind of *African Copulation* of such *species* of things together, which in *Nature* seem wholly *incompossible*, (as the *Schools* speak) or have no *congruity* at all in the *order* of the *Universe*. So that had there never been any such *things* in the World as *matter* and *motion*, it is very hard to conceive, how the *understanding* could have formed within its self the *variety* of the *species* of such things, which are the *results* of those two grand *principles* of the *Universe*. But because it is so *impossible* for minds not very *contemplative* and *Metaphysical* to *abstract* from *matter*, thence it is we are apt to *imagine* such a *Power* in the *understanding*, whereby it may form *Idea's* of such things which have no *objective reality* at all. I grant those we call *entia rationis* have no *external reality* as they are *such*; but yet I say, the *existence* of *matter* in the *world*, and the *corporeal Phantasms* of *outward beings*, are the *foundation* of the *soul's conception* of those *entities*, which have no *existence* beyond the *humane Intellect*.

Sect. 4. The great enquiry then is, how far this *Plaſtick Power* of the *underſtanding*, may extend its ſelf in its *forming* an *Idea* of *God*. That there is ſuch a *one* in the minds of men, is evident to every one that *conſults* his own *faculties*, and enquires of them, whether they cannot apprehend a *ſetled* and *conſiſtent notion* of a *Being* which is *abſolutely Perfect*. For that is all we underſtand by the *Idea* of *God*; not that there is any ſuch *connate Idea* in the *Soul*, in the ſenſe which *connate Idea's* are commonly underſtood; but that there is a *faculty* in the *Soul*, whereby upon the free uſe of *reaſon*, it can *form* within its ſelf a ſetled *notion* of ſuch a *Being*, which is as *perfect* as it is *poſſible* for us to conceive a *Being* to be. If any difficulty be made concerning the *forming* ſuch a *notion* in ones mind, let the perſon who ſcruples it, only *enquire* of himſelf, whether he *judges* all *Beings* in the *world* equal; whether a *muſhroom* hath in it all the *perfections* which *man* hath? which I ſuppoſe *none*, who have a mind within them can queſtion. If then it be granted that man hath ſome *perfections* in him above *inferiour creatures*, it will be no matter of difficulty to ſhew wherein *man* exceeds other *inferiour Beings*. For is not *life* a greater *perfection* than the *want* of it? is not *reaſon* and *knowledge*, a *perfection* above *ſenſe*? and ſo let us proceed to thoſe things, wherein one *man* differs from *another*; for it is evident, that all *men* are not of *equal accompliſhments*; is it not then *forecaſt* and *prudence* above *incogitancy* and *folly*? is not the *knowledge* of *cauſes* of things better than *ſtupidity* and *ignorance*? is not *beneficence* and *liberality* more noble than *parſimony* and *narrowneſs* of *ſpirit*? is not true *goodneſs* far above *debauchery* and *intemperance*? and are not all theſe far better, when they are joyned with ſuch a *power* as hath no *limits*, or *bounds* at all? Now then is it not poſſible for a mans *mind*; proceeding in its ordinary way of *intellection*, to *form* a *notion* of ſuch a *Being*, which hath *wiſdom*, *goodneſs* and *power* in it, without any *limits* and *bounds* at all, or any of thoſe *abatements*, which any of theſe *perfections* are found within *man*? For it is unconceivable, that the *mind* of *man* can attribute to its ſelf *abſolute perfection*, when it cannot but ſee its own *defects* in thoſe *things* it excells other *creatures* in; and ſuppoſing it had *power*, *goodneſs* and *knowledge* far above what it hath; yet it cannot but ſay, that theſe *perfections* would be

greater

greater if it were *always* possessed of them, and it were *impossible* that it should ever cease to be, or not have been. So that now joyning *infinite goodness*, *wisdom* and *power*, with *eternity* and *necessity* of *existence*, the *result* is the notion of a *Being absolutely perfect*. So that now whoever questions the *suitableness* of such a *notion* or *Idea* to the *faculties* of mens *souls*, must question the *truth* of his own *faculties*, and the method they proceed in, in their cleerest *conceptions* and *ratiocinations*. And the *mind* of *man* may as well question the *truth* of any *Idea* it hath within its self, as of this we now discourse of. Nay, it may be far sooner *puzled* in any of those *Idea's*, which are *transmitted* into the *Phantasie* by the *impressions* of *Corporeal Beings* upon the *Organs* of *sense*, than in this more *intellectual* and *abstracted Idea*, which depends wholly upon the mind.

All the *difficulty* now is, whether this *Idea* of such an *absolutely perfect Being*, be any thing else but the understanding's *Plastick power*, whereby it can *unite* all these *perfections* together in one *conception*; or doth it necessarily imply, that there must be such a *Being* really *existent*, or else I could never have formed such a setled *notion* of him in my mind? To this I answer, 1. It is as much as I desire at present, that the *forming* of such an *Idea* in the *mind*, is as *suitable* and *agreeable* to our *faculties* as the *forming* the *conception* of any other *Being* in the *world*. For hereby it is most evident that the *notion* of a *God* imports nothing *incongruous* to *reason*, or *repugnant* to the *faculties* of our *souls*; but that the *mind* will *form* as setled and clear a *notion* of *God*, as of any thing which in the judgment of *Epicurus*, his infallible *senses* did the most assure him of. So that there can be no shadow of a *pretence*, why any should reject the *Being* of a *God* because of the *impossibility* to conceive any such *Being* as *God* is. If to this it be objected, *that such things are implyed in this Idea, which make it unconceivable, in that all the perfections in this being are supposed to be infinite, and infinity transcends our capacity of apprehension.* To this I answer, 1. That those who deny *infinity* in *God*, must necessarily attribute it to something else, as to *infinite space*, *infinity* of *successions* of *ages* and *persons*, if the *World* were *eternal*; and therefore it is most *unreasonable* to reject any *notion* for that, which it is impossible, but if I deny that, I must attribute it to some- *Sect.* 5.

thing elſe, to whoſe *Idea* it is far leſs proper than it is to *God's*. 2. Leſt I ſhould rather ſeek to avoid the *argument* than to ſatisfie it, I ſay, that though *infinite* as *infinite* cannot be comprehended, yet we may *clearly* and *diſtinctly* apprehend a *Being* to be of that *Nature*, that no *limits* can be aſſigned to it, as to its *Power* or *Preſence*; which is as much as to underſtand it to be *infinite*. The *ratio formalis* of *infinity* may not be underſtood clearly and diſtinctly, but yet the *Being* which is *infinite* may be. *Infinity* its ſelf cannot be on this account, becauſe however *poſitive* we apprehend it, yet we always apprehend it in a *negative way*, becauſe we conceive it by *denying* all *limitations* and *bounds* to it; but the *Being* which is *infinite* we apprehend in a *poſitive manner*, although not *adequately*, becauſe we cannot comprehend all which is in it. As we may clearly and diſtinctly ſee the *Sea*, though we cannot diſcover the *bounds* of it; ſo may we clearly and diſtinctly *apprehend* ſome *Perfections* of *God* when we *fix* our minds on them, although we are not able to *graſp* them altogether in our *narrow* and *confined intellects*, becauſe they are *Infinite*. Thus we ſee that *God's Infinity* doth not at all abate the *clearneſs* and *diſtinctneſs* of the *notion* which we have of *God*; ſo that though the *Perfections* of *God* are without *bounds* or *limits*, yet it bears no *repugnancy* at all to mens natural *faculties*, to have a ſetled *Idea* of a *Being Infinitely perfect* in their minds.

Sect. 6. To the *Queſtion* I anſwer, It ſeems highly *probable* and far more *conſonant* to *reaſon* than the *contrary*, that this *Idea* of *God* upon the *mind* of man, is no merely *fictitious Idea*, but that it is really *imprinted* there by that *God* whoſe *Idea* it is, and therefore doth ſuppoſe a *reality* in the thing correſpondent to that *objective reality* which is in the underſtanding. For although I am not ſo well ſatisfied that the mere *objective reality* of the *Idea* of *God* doth exceed the *efficiency* of the mind, as that *Idea* is nakedly conſidered in its ſelf, becauſe of the unlimited *power* of the *underſtanding* in *conception*: Yet I ſay, conſidering that *Idea* in all the *circumſtances* of it, it ſeems highly *probable* that it is no mere *ens rationis*, or *figment* of the *underſtanding*; and that will appear on theſe conſiderations. 1. This *Idea* is of ſuch a *Nature* as could not be *formed* from the *underſtanding's conſideration* of any *corporeal phantaſms*. Becauſe

Because whatever hath any thing of *matter* in it, involves of *necessity* many *imperfections* along with it; for every part of *matter* is *divisible* into more *parts*. Now it is a thing evident to *natural light*, that it is a greater *perfection* not to be divisible than to be so. Besides, *corporeal phantasms* are so far from helping us in forming this *Idea*, that they alone hinder us from a *distinct conception* of it, while we attend to them; because these bear no *proportion* at all to such a *being*. So that this *Idea* however must be a pure *act* of *intellection*, and therefore supposing there were no other *faculty* in man but *imagination*, it would bear the greatest *repugnancy* to our *conceptions*, and it would be according to the *principles* of *Epicurus* and some modern *Philosophers*, a thing wholly *impossible* to form an *Idea* of *God*, unless with *Epicurus* we imagine him to be *corporeal*, which is to say, he is no *God*. Which was the reason that *Tully* said, *Epicurus* did only, *nomine ponere, re tollere Deos*, because such a notion of *God* is repugnant to natural light. So that if this *Idea* doth wholly abstract from *corporeal phantasms*; it thereby appears that there is a higher *faculty* in man's *soul* than mere *imagination*, and it is hardly conceivable whence a *faculty* which thus extends it self to an *infinite object*, should come, but from an *infinite Being*: especially if we consider, Secondly, That the *understanding* in *forming* this *Idea* of *God*, doth not by distinct *acts*, first collect one *perfection*, and then *another*, and at last *unite* these *together*, but the *simplicity* and *unity* of all these *perfections* is as necessarily conceived as any of them. Granting then that the understanding by the observing of several *perfections* in the world, might be able to *abstract* these severally from each *Being* wherein they were, yet whence should the *Idea* of the *unity* and *inseparability* of all these *perfections* come? The mind may, it is true, knit some *things* together in *fictitious Idea's*, but then those are so far from *unity* with each other, that in themselves they speak mutual *repugnancy* to one another, which makes them proper *entia rationis*; but these several *perfections* are so far from speaking *repugnancy* to each other, that the *unity* and *inseparability* of them is as necessary to the *forming* of this *Idea*, as any other *perfection* whatsoever. So that from hence it appears that the consideration of the *perfections* which are in the *Creatures*, is only an occasion given to the mind to help it in its *Idea* of *God*, and

not

not that the *Idea* it ſelf depends upon thoſe *perfections* as the *cauſes* of it; as in the cleareſt *Mathematical truths* the manner of *demonſtration* may be neceſſary to help the underſtanding to its clearer *aſſent*, though the things in themſelves be undoubtedly *true*. For all minds are not equally capable of the ſame *truths*; ſome are of quicker *apprehenſion* than others are; now although to ſlower apprehenſions a more particular way of *demonſtrating* things be neceſſary, yet the *truths* in themſelves are *equal*, though they have not equal evidence to ſeveral perſons.

3. It appears that this is no mere *fictitious Idea* from the *uniformity* of it in all *perſons* who have freed themſelves from the *entanglements* of *corporeal phantaſms*. Thoſe we call *entia rationis*, we find by *experience* in our *minds*, that they are formed *ad placitum*; we may imagine them as many *ways* as we pleaſe; but we ſee it is quite otherwiſe in this *Idea* of *God*; for in thoſe *attributes* or *perfections* which by the *light* of *Nature* we *attribute* to *God*, there is an *uniform conſent* in all thoſe who have *diveſted* their minds of *corporeal phantaſms* in their *conceptions* of *God*. For while men have agreed that the *object* of their *Idea* is a *being abſolutely perfect*, there hath been no *diſſent* in the *perfections* which have been attributed to it; none have queſtioned but *infinite wiſdom, goodneſs, and power, joyned with neceſſity of exiſtence*, have been all implyed in this *Idea*. So that it is ſcarce poſſible to inſtance in any one *Idea*, no not of thoſe things which are moſt *obvious* to our *ſenſes*, wherein there hath been ſo great an *uniformity* of mens *conceptions* as in this *Idea* of *God*. And the moſt groſs *corporeal Idea* of the moſt ſenſible *matter* hath been more liable to *beats* and *diſputes* among *Philoſophers*, than this *Idea* of a *Being infinite* and purely *ſpiritual*. Which ſtrongly proves my preſent *propoſition*, that this *Idea* of *God* is very *conſonant* to *natural light*; for it is hardly conceivable that there ſhould be ſo *univerſal* a *conſent* of minds in this *Idea*, were it not a natural *reſult* from the free *uſe* of our *reaſon* and *faculties*. And that which adds further weight to this argument is, that although *Infinity* be ſo neceſſarily *implyed* in this *Idea* of *God*, yet men do not attribute all kind of *infinite* things to *God*; for there being conceivable *infinite number*, *infinite longitude*, as well as *infinite power* and *knowledge*, our minds readily attribute the *latter*

to

to *God*, and as readily *abſtract* the other from his *nature*, which is an argument this *Idea* is not *fictitious*, but argues *reality* in the thing *correſpondent* to our conception of it. So much may ſuffice to clear the firſt propoſition, *viz. That the notion of a God is very ſuitable to the faculties of men's ſouls, and to that light of nature which they proceed by in forming the conceptions of things.*

Sect. 7. Prop. 2.

Thoſe who deny that there is a God, do aſſert other things on far leſs evidence of reaſon, and muſt by their own principles deny ſome things which are apparently true. One would expect that ſuch *perſons* who are apt to condemn the whole world of folly in believing the *truth* of *Religion*, and would fain be admired as men of a deeper *reach*, and greater *wit* and *ſagacity* than others, would, when they have *exploded* a *Deity*, at leaſt give us ſome more rational and conſiſtent *account* of things, than we can give that there is a *God*. But on the contrary we find the *reaſons* on which they *reject* a *Deity* ſo lamentably *weak*, and ſo eaſily *retorted* upon themſelves, and the *hypotheſes* they ſubſtitute inſtead of a *Deity* ſo *precarious*, *obſcure* and *uncertain*, that we need no other argument to evince the *reaſonableneſs* of *Religion*, than from the manifeſt *folly* as well as *impiety* of thoſe who oppoſe it. Which we ſhall make evident by theſe two things: 1. *That while they deny a Deity, they aſſert other things on far leſs reaſon.* 2. *That by thoſe principles on which they deny a Deity, they muſt deny ſome things which are apparently true.*

1. *That they aſſert ſome things on far leſs reaſon than we do that there is a God.* For if there be not an *infinitly powerfull God* who produced the world out of nothing, it muſt neceſſarily follow according to the different *principles* of the *Ariſtotelian* and *Epicurean Atheiſts*, that either the *world* was as it is from all *eternity*, or elſe that it was at firſt made by the *fortuitous concourſe* of *Atoms*. Now I appeal to the *reaſon* of any *perſon*, who hath the free *uſe* of it, Whether either of theſe two *hypotheſes* urged with the ſame or greater difficulties, *&c.* be not far more weakly proved than the *exiſtence* of a *Deity* is, or the *production* of the *world* by him.

1. *They run themſelves into the ſame difficulties* which they would avoid in the *belief* of a *Deity*; and nothing can be a greater *evidence* of an *intangled* mind than this is: To deny a thing becauſe

becauſe of ſome *difficulty* in it, and inſtead of it to aſſert another thing which is *chargeable* with the very ſame *difficulty* in a higher degree. Thus when they reject a *Deity*, becauſe they cannot underſtand what *infinity* means; both theſe *hypotheſes* are liable to the ſame *intricacy* in *apprehending* the nature of ſomething *infinite*. For according to the *Epicureans*, there muſt be an *infinite ſpace*, and what greater eaſe to the mind is there in *conceiving* an *Idea* of that than of an *Infinite Being*? And if the *world* be *eternal*, there muſt have been paſt an *infinite ſucceſſion* of *ages*, and is not the *underſtanding* as eaſily loſt in this, as in an *eternal Being* which created the world? For if the *courſe* of *generations* in the world had no *beginning* at all, (which neceſſarily follows upon the *eternity* of the *world*) then an *infinite number* of *ſucceſſions* are already *paſt*, and if *paſt*, then at an *end*, and ſo we find an *infinite* which hath had an *end*, which is a *conſequence* becoming one who avoids the *belief* of a *Deity*, becauſe *Infinity* is an *unconceivable* thing. Beſides, if the *number* of *generations* hath been *infinite*; theſe two *conſequences* will unavoidably follow, which the *reaſon* of any one but an *Atheiſt* would ſtartle at, that one *Infinite* may be *greater* than *another*, and that the *part* is *equal* to the *whole*. For let him fix where he pleaſe, in the *courſe* of *generations*, I demand whether in the *Great-grandfather's* time the *ſucceſſion* of *generations* was *finite* or *infinite*; if *finite*, then it had a *beginning*; and ſo the *world* not *eternal*; if *infinite*, then I ask, whether there were not a longer *ſucceſſion* of *generations* in the *time* of his *Great-grand-children*, and ſo there muſt be a *number* greater than that which was *infinite*; for the former *ſucceſſion* was infinite, and this hath more *generations* in it than *that* had; but if it be ſaid that they were *equal*, becauſe both *infinite*, then the *ſucceſſion* of *generations* to the *Grand-father*, being but a part of that which *extends* to his *Grand-children* and *poſterity*, the *part* is *equal* to the *whole*. And is not now the *notion* of an *Infinite Being* enough to ſtumble an *Atheiſt's* reaſon, when it can ſo nimbly *leap* over ſo apparent contradictions? I inſiſt not on this as an evident *demonſtration* to prove a *Deity*, which poſſibly it may not amount to, becauſe it may only *demonſtrate* the *impoſſibility* of our *underſtandings comprehending* the nature of *Infinity*. But however it doth moſt evidently *demonſtrate* the *folly* and *unreaſonableneſs*

ableness of the *Atheist* who rejects the *Being* of *God* on the account of his *Infinity*, when his understanding is more *lost* in apprehending an *infinite succession* of *generations* which follows from his *supposition* of the *eternity* of the world. If then it be *impossible*, as it is, upon any *principles* whatsoever, to avoid the *conception* of somewhat *infinite* and *eternal*, either *matter* or *space*, or some *Being*, let any one *appeal* to his own *reason*, whether it be not more *agreeable* to that, to attribute these *perfections* to such a *Being*, to whose *Idea* they necessarily *belong*, than to *attribute* them to this *world*, in whose *conception* they are not at all implied; but on the contrary they do far more puzzle our *understandings* than when we conceive them to be in *God*. If somewhat must have a continued *duration*, and be of an *unbounded nature*, how much more *rational* is it to conceive *wisdom*, *power*, and *goodness* to be conjoined with *eternity* and *infinity*, than to bestow these attributes upon an empty *space*, or upon dull and unactive *matter*? It cannot be *reason* then, but some more *base* and *unworthy* principle which makes the *Atheist* question the *Being* of *God*, because his *perfections* are *unconceivable*, when according to his own *principles* the most *puzzling* attributes of *God* return upon *him* with more *force* and *violence*, and that in a more *inexplicable* manner.

Sect. 8. 2. As the *Atheist* must admit those things himself which he rejects the *Being* of *God* for; so he admits them upon far *weaker grounds* than we do *attribute* them to *God*. If any thing may be made evident to man's natural *reason* concerning the *existence* of a *Being* so *infinite* as *God* is, we doubt not but to make it appear that we have great *assurance* of the *Being* of *God*, but how far must the *Atheist go*, how heartily must he *beg* before his *hypothesis* either of the *fortuitous concourse* of *atoms*, or *eternity* of the *world* will be granted to him? For if we stay till he *proves* either of *these* by *evident* and *demonstrative reasons*, the *world* may have an *end* before he proves his *atoms* could give it a *beginning*, and we may find it *eternal*, *à parte post*, before he can prove it was so *à parte ante*. For the proof of a *Deity* we appeal to his own *faculties*, *reason* and *conscience*; we make *use* of *arguments* before his *eyes*; we bring the *universal sense* of *mankind* along with us: But for his *principles*, we must wholly alter the present *stage* of the *world*, and *crumble* the whole *Universe* into *little particles*; we must

grind the *Sun* to *powder*, and by a new way of *interment* turn the *earth into duſt and aſhes*, before we can ſo much as *imagine* how the *world* could be framed. And when we have thus far *begged* leave to *imagine* things to be what they never *were*, we muſt then ſtand by in ſome *infinite ſpace* to behold the *friſkings* and *dancings* about of theſe little *particles* of *matter*, till by their frequent *rencounters* and *juſtlings* one upon another, they at laſt *link* themſelves together, and run ſo long in a *round* till they make *whirl-pools* enough for *Sun*, *Moon* and *Stars*, and all the *bodies* of the *Univerſe* to *emerge* out of. But what was it which at firſt ſet theſe little *particles* of *matter* in *motion*? Whence came ſo great *variety* in them to *produce* ſuch *wonderfull diverſities* in *bodies* as there are in the world? How came theſe *caſual motions* to hit ſo luckily into ſuch admirable *contrivances* as are in the *Univerſe*? When once I ſee a *thouſand* blind men run the *point* of a *ſword* in at a *key-hole* without *one* miſſing; when I find them all *friſking* together in a *ſpacious field*, and exactly meeting all at laſt in the very *middle* of it; when I once find, as *Tully* ſpeaks, the *Annals* of *Ennius* fairly written in a *heap* of *ſand*, and as *Kepler*'s *wife* told him, a *room full* of *herbs* moving up and down, fall *down* into the exact *order* of *ſallets*, I may then think the *Atomical hypotheſis probable*, and not before. But what evidence of *reaſon* or *demonſtration* have we that the great *bodies* of the *world* did *reſult* from ſuch a *motion* of theſe ſmall *particles*? It is poſſible to be ſo, ſaith *Epicurus*; what if we grant it *poſſible*? can no *things* in the *world* be, which it is *poſſible* might have been *otherwiſe*? What elſe thinks *Epicurus* of the *generations* of *things* now? they are ſuch certainly as the *world* now is, and yet he believes it was once otherwiſe: Muſt therefore a bare *poſſibility* of the *contrary* make us *deny* our *reaſon*, *ſilence conſcience*, *contradict* the *univerſal ſenſe* of *mankind* by *excluding* a *Deity* out of the world? But whence doth it appear *poſſible*? Did we ever find any thing of the ſame nature with the world produced in ſuch a manner by ſuch a *concourſe* of *atoms*? Or is it becauſe we find in *natural beings*, how much theſe *particles* of *matter* ſerve to *ſolve* the *Phænomena* of *nature*? But doth it at all follow, becauſe now under *Divine providence* which wiſely *orders* the *world*, and things in it, that theſe *particles*, with their ſeveral *affections* and *motion*, may

give

give us a tolerable *account* of many *appearances* as to *bodies*, that therefore the *Universe* had its *original* merely by a *concretion* of *these*, without any *divine hand* to *order* and *direct* their *motion*? But of this more, when we come to the *creation* of the *world*; our design now is only to compare the *notion* of a *Deity*, and of the *Atheist*'s *hypothesis* in point of *perspicuity* and *evidence* of *reason*: of which let any one who hath reason judge. Thus we see how the *Atheist* in *denying* a *Deity*, must *assert* something else instead of it, which is pressed with the same, if not greater *difficulties*, and proved by far less *reason*.

The Atheist by the same principles on which he denies a God, must deny some things which are apparently true. Which will be evident by our running over the most plausible pretences which he insists upon. *Sect.* 9. 2.

1. Because the *Being* of *God* cannot be *demonstrated*. But how doth the *Atheist* mean it? Is it *because God cannot be demonstrated to sense, that we cannot* [*digito monstrari & dicier hic est*] *point at him with our fingers*? It is a *sign* there is little of *reason* left, where *sense* is made the only *Umpire* of all *kinds* of *Beings*. Must all *intellectual Beings* be *proscribed* out of the *order* of *Nature*, because they cannot pass the *scrutiny* of *sense*? And by the same *reason* all *colours* shall be *dashed* out because they cannot be *heard*; all *noises silenced*, because they cannot be seen; for why may not one *sense* be set to *judge* of all *objects* of *sense* with far more *reason*, than *sense* it self be set as *Judge* over *Intellectual Beings*? But yet it is wisely done of the *Atheist* to make *sense* his *judge*; for if we once *appeal* to this, he knows our *cause* is lost; for as he said of a *Physician*, when one asked him, whether he had any *experience* of him: no, said he, *Si periculum feciſſem, non viverem*; *If I had tryed him, I had been dead e'er now*; so here, If *God* were to be *tryed* by the *judgment* of *sense*, he must cease to be *God*; for how can an *infinite* and *spiritual Being* be discerned by the *judgment* of *sense*? and if he be not an *infinite* and *spiritual Being*, he is not *God*. But it may be the *Atheist*'s meaning is not so *gross*, but he intends such a *demonstration to reason as that two and two make four, or that the whole is greater than the parts*; with such a *demonstration* he would sit down contented. But will no less than this serve him? what becomes then of the *world*'s being *made* by a *fortuitous concourse* of *atoms*? is this as evi-

dent as that two and two make four? And will the *Philoſophical Atheiſt* really believe nothing in *nature*, but what is as *evident* to him in *material Beings*, as *that the whole is greater than the parts?* By any *means* let *Atheiſts* then write *Philoſophy*, that at laſt the *Clocks* in *London* may *ſtrike* together, and the *Philoſophers* agree; for I ſuppoſe none of *them* queſtion that. But yet it is poſſible the *Atheiſt* may in a good humour abate ſomething of this, and mean by *demonſtration ſuch a proof as takes away all difficulties.* If he means as to the *ground* of *aſſent*, we *undertake* it; if as to the *object apprehended*, we reject it as *unreaſonable*, becauſe it is *impoſſible* a *Being infinite* ſhould be *comprehended* by us; for if it could, it were no longer *infinite.* But let us try this *principle* by other *things*, and how *evident* is it, that on this account ſome things muſt be *denied* which himſelf will confeſs to be *true?* for *inſtance*, that *opprobrium Philoſophorum*, the *diviſibility* of *quantity*, or *extended matter* into *finite* or *infinite* parts; let him take which ſide he pleaſe, and ſee whether by the *force* of the *arguments* on either ſide, if he hold to this *principle*, he muſt not be *forced* to deny that there is any ſuch *thing* as *matter* in the *world*; and then we may well have an *infinite empty ſpace*, when by the *force* of this one *principle*, both *God* and *matter* are *baniſhed* quite out of the world. But if the *Atheiſt* will but come one ſtep *lower*, and by his *demonſtration* intend nothing elſe but ſuch a *ſufficient proof* of it as the *nature* of the *thing* is capable of, he will not only ſpeak moſt *conſonantly* to *reaſon*, but may be in ſome *hopes* of gaining *ſatisfaction.* For it is moſt evident, that all things are not *capable* of the like way of *proof*; and that in ſome *caſes* the *poſſibility* of the *contrary* muſt be no *hindrance* to an *undoubted aſſent.* What theſe *proofs* are, will appear afterwards. I come to the next ground of the *Atheiſt*'s opinion, which is,

2. *The weakneſs of ſome arguments brought to prove a Deity.* But let us grant that ſome *arguments* will not doe it, doth it therefore follow that *none* can doe it? What if ſome have proved the *Sun* to be the *center* of the *world*; and the *motion* of the *earth*, by very *weak arguments*, will the *Atheiſt* therefore queſtion it? what if *Epicurus* hath proved his *atomical hypotheſis* by ſome ſilly *ſophiſms*, will the *Atheiſt* therefore rather believe the *creation* of the *world* than it? What if the *Atheiſt* may make himſelf *ſport* at ſome *ſtories* of *apparitions* inſiſted on to

prove

prove a *Deity*, doth it therefore follow there is no *God*, because some *persons* have been *over-credulous*? What if some having more *zeal* than *knowledge*, may *attribute* such *things* to *God's immediate hand*, which may be *produced* by natural *causes*, doth it thence follow that *God* hath no *hand* in *governing* the *world* at all? What if *fears*, and *hopes* and *perswasions*, may depend much on *principles* of *education*, must *conscience* then be resolved wholly into *these*? What if some *devout Melancholist* may imbrace the issues of his own *imagination* for the *impressions* of the *Divine Spirit*, doth it therefore follow, that *religion* is nothing but *strength* of *fancy* improved by *principles* of *education*? What if some of the *numerous proofs* of a *Deity* were cut off, and only those made *use* of, which are of greatest *force*, would the *truth* suffer at all by that? I grant, *advantage* is often taken against a thing more by one weak *argument* brought for it, than for it by the *strongest proofs*: but I say, it is *unreasonable* it should be so; and were men *rational* and *ingenuous* it would not be so. Many times *arguments* may be good in their *order*, but they are *mis-placed*; some may prove the *thing rational*, which may not prove it *true*; some may shew the *absurdities* of the *adversaries*, rejecting the *thing*, which may not be *sufficient* to prove it; now when men *number* and not *weigh* their *arguments*, but give them in the *lump* to the main *question*, without *fitting* them to their several *places*, they do more *disservice* to the *main* of the *battle* by the *disorder* of their *forces*, than they can *advantage* it by the *number* of them.

3. Another great pretence the *Atheist* hath, is, that *religion* is only an *invention* of *Politicians*, which they *awe people* with as they *please*, and therefore tell them of a *God*, and another *world*, as *Mothers send young children to school to keep them in better order*, that they may govern them with the greater ease. To this I answer, 1. *Religion* I grant, hath a great *influence* upon the *well-governing* the world, nay so great, that were the *Atheists* opinion *true*, and the world perswaded of it, it were impossible the world could be well governed. For the *Government* of the *world* in *civil societies*, depends not so much on *force*, as the sacred *bonds* of *duty* and *allegiance*, which hold a *Nation* that owns *religion* as *true*, in far surer *obligations* to endeavour the *peace* and *welfare* of a *Nation*

tion than ever *violence* can do. For in this caſe only an *opportunity* is *watched* for to *ſhake* off that which they account a *yoak* upon their *necks*; whereas when mens minds are poſſeſſed with a *ſenſe* of *duty* and *obligation* to *obedience* out of *conſcience*, the *reins* may be held with greater *eaſe*; and yet the *people* be better *managed* by them, than by ſuch as only *gall* and *inrage* them. So that I grant *true Religion* to be the moſt *ſerviceable* principle for the *governing* of civil *ſocieties*; but withal, I ſay, 2. It were *impoſſible religion* ſhould be ſo much made *uſe* of for the *governing* of *people*, were there not a real *propenſity* and *inclination* to *religion imprinted* on the *minds* of *men*. For as, did not men *love themſelves*, and their *children*, their *eſtates* and *intereſts*, it were *impoſſible* to keep *them* in *obedience* to *Laws*; but doth it follow, becauſe *Magiſtrates* perſwade *people* to *obedience* by ſuiting *Laws* to the general *intereſt* of men, that therefore the *Magiſtrates* firſt made them *love themſelves* and their own *concerns*? So it is in *religion*, the *Magiſtrate* may make *uſe* of this *propenſity* to *religion* in men for *civil ends*, but his making *uſe* of it doth *ſuppoſe* it and not *inſtill* it. For were *Religion* nothing elſe in the *world* but a *deſign* only of *Politicians*, it would be *impoſſible* to keep that *deſign* from being *diſcovered* at one time or other, and when once it came to be *known*, it would *hurry* the whole *world* into *confuſion*; and the *people* would make no *ſcruple* of all *oaths* and *obligations*, but every one would ſeek to do others what miſchief he could if he had *opportunity*, and *obey* no further than *fear* and *force* conſtrained him. Therefore no *principle* can be ſo *dangerous* to a *ſtate* as *Atheiſm*, nor any thing more *promote* its *peace* than true *Religion*; and the more *men* are *perſwaded* of the *truth* of *Religion*, they will be the better *ſubjects*, and the more *uſeful* in civil *ſocieties*. As well then may an *Atheiſt* ſay there is no ſuch *thing* as *good nature* in the world, becauſe that is apt to be *abuſed*, nor any ſuch thing as *love*, becauſe that may be *cheated*, as that *Religion* is nothing but a *deſign*, becauſe men may make it *ſtalk* to their private ends. Thus we ſee how the *Atheiſt by the force of thoſe principles on which he denies a God, muſt be forced to deny other things, which yet by his own confeſſion are apparently true.*

So

So I come to the third *Proposition*, which is, *That we have as certain evidence that there is a God, as we can have, considering his nature.* When we demand the proof of a *thing*, our first *eye* must be to the *nature* of the *thing* which we *desire* may be proved; For *things* equally *true*, are not *capable* of *equal evidence*, nor have like *manners* of *probation*. There is no *demonstration* in *Euclide* will serve to prove that there are such *places* as the *Indies*: we cannot *prove* the *earth* is *round* by the *judgment* of *sense*; nor that the *soul* is *immortal* by *corporeal phantasms*. Every distinct *kind* of *Being* hath its peculiar *way* of *probation*; and therefore it ought not to be at all wondred at, if the *Supream* and *infinite Being* have his peculiar way of *demonstrating* himself to the *minds* of *men*. If then we have as evident *proofs* of the *existence* of *God*, as we can have, considering the *infinity* of his *nature*, it is all which in reason we can *desire*; and of that kind of proofs we have these following. For, 1. *If God hath stamped an universal character of himself upon the minds of men.* 2. *If the things in the world are the manifest effects of infinite wisdom, goodness and power.* 3. *If there be such things in the world which are unaccountable without a Deity*, then we may with safety and assurance conclude *that there is a God.* Sect. 10. Prop. 3.

1. *That God hath imprinted an universal character of himself on the minds of men*, and that may be known by two things. 1. *If it be such as bears the same importance among all persons.* 2. *If it be such as cannot be mistaken for the character of any thing else.*

1. I begin with the first, whereby I shall prove this *character* to be *universal*, because the whole *world* hath *consented* in it. This *argument* we may rely on with the greater *security*, because it was the only *argument* which retained the *Deity* in the ancient *School* of *Epicurus*; which could he have thought of as easie way of *evading*, as he thought he had found out as to the *Origin* of the *universe*, he was no such great *friend* to the very *name* of a *God*, as to have *retained* it as an *Anticipation* or *Prolepsis* of *humane nature*. And this *argument* from the universal *consent* of the world, was that which bore the greatest *sway* among the *Philosophers*, who went by *nothing* but *dictates* of *natural light*, which they could not so clearly discover in any *things*, as in those which all *mankind* did *unanimously* consent

sent in. Two things I shall make out this by. 1. *That no sufficient account can be given of so universal a consent, unless it be supposed to be the voice of nature.* 2. *That the dissent of any particular persons is not sufficient to controul so universal an agreement.*

1. *That no sufficient account of it can be given, but only by asserting it to be a dictate of nature.* In so strange a *dissent* as there hath been in the *world* concerning most of those things which relate to *mankind* in common, as the *models* of *government*, the *Laws* they are ruled by, the particular *rites* and *customs* of *worship*; we have the greatest *reason* to *judge* that those *common principles* which were the *foundations* on which all these several different *customs* were *built*, were not the *effect* of any positive *Laws*, nor the mere *force* of *principles* of *education*, but something which had a *deeper root* and *foundation* in the *principles* of *nature* it self. A *common* and *universal effect* must *flow* from some *common* and *universal cause*. So the *Stoick* argues in *Tully*, If there were no God, *non tam stabilis opinio permaneret, nec confirmaretur diuturnitate temporis, nec una cum sæculis ætatibusque hominum inveterare potuisset.* It is strange to think that *mankind* in so many *ages* of the *world* should not grow *wise* enough to rid it self of so *troublesome* an opinion as that was, of the *Being* of *God*, had it not been *true*.

De Nat. Deor. l. 2.

We see in all the *alterations* of the world, other vain opinions have been detected, refuted and shaken off; if this had been such, how comes it to remain the same in all ages, and Nations of the world? *Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat.* It is a great discredit to *Time* to make it like a River in that sence, that it *bears* up only *lighter* things when matters of greatest *weight* are *sunk* to the *bottom* and past recovery. This may pass for a handsom allusion, as to the opinions and writings of particular persons, but cannot be understood of such *things* which are *founded* on the universal *consent* of the *world*; for these *common notions* of humane nature are so suited to the *temper* of the world, that they pass down the strong *current* of *Time* with the same facility that a well built ship, though of good burden, doth *furrow* the *Ocean*. So that if we must adhere to the *Allegory*, it is easily replyed, that it is not the *weight* of things which makes them *sink*, but the unsuitableness of their *superficies* to that of the Water;

Water; so we see a small piece of wood will sink, when a stately ship is born up; so such things which have not that *agreeableness* in them to the *dictates* of *Nature* may soon be lost, but such as lie so *even* upon the *superficies* of the *soul*, will still *float* above the *water*, and never be lost in the swiftest *current* of *Time*. Thus we assert this *universal consent* of *mankind*, as to the *existence* of a *Deity*, to be a thing so consonant to our Natural *reason*, that as long as there are men in the World it will continue.

Sect. 11.

But now it is hardly conceivable, according to the *Principles* of *Epicurus*, how mankind should universally agree in some *common sentiments*; much less how it should have such an *anticipation* as himself grants of the *Being of God*. For if the soul be nothing else but some more *active* and *vigorous particles* of *matter* (as *Diogenes Laertius* tells us, that his opinion was that the *soul* was nothing else but a *System* ἐξ ἀτόμων λειοτάτων καὶ στρογγυλοτάτων, *of the most smooth and round atoms*) if so, it is very hard apprehending how any such things as *anticipations* or *common Notions* can be lodged in the soul; For if our *souls* be nothing else but some small *sphærical corpuscles* which move up and down the body, as the *Epicurean Philosophy* supposeth, then all our knowledge and *perception* must depend on *motion*, which *motion* must be by the *impression* of *external objects*: which *Lucretius* acknowledgeth and contends for.

Lib. 10. *in v. Epic. v. Gassend. To.* 2. *l.* 3. *sect.* 3.

> *Invenies primis à sensibus esse creatam*
> *Notitiam veri.* *Lib.* 4.

If then our *knowledge* of *truth* comes in by our *senses*, and *sensation* doth wholly depend upon the *impression* of outward *objects*, what becomes of all *common Notions* and of the *Prolepsis* of a *Deity*? unless we suppose the knowledge of a *Deity* came in by *sense*, which *Epicurus* himself denies when he attributes to the *Deity* not *corpus*, but *quasi corpus*, as *Tully* tells us, and therefore he is not a proper *object* of sense. So that it is impossible there should be any such *thing* as a *natural Notion* which may be the *ground* of *universal consent* among men, according to the *Doctrine* of *Epicurus*. And therefore it stands to all *reason* in the world, that if our *senses* be the only com-

De Nat. Deor. lib. 1.

petent *Judges* of *truth*, men ſhould differ about nothing more than ſuch things which cannot be tryed by the judgment of *ſenſe*; Such as the notion of a *God* is; (for where ſhould men be more uncertain in their judgments, than in ſuch things which they have no rule at all to go by in the judging of?) but we are ſo far from *finding* it ſo that men are nothing ſo much *agreed* about the *objects* of *ſenſe*, as they are about the *exiſtence* of a *Deity*; and therefore we ſee this univerſal *conſent* of *mankind* concerning a *God*, cannot be *ſalved* by the *principles* of thoſe who deny it; according to which no account at all can be given of any ſuch things as *univerſal* or *common notions*.

Sect. 12. Neither can this univerſal *conſent* of mankind be *enervated* with any greater probability by thoſe *Atheiſts* who aſſert the *eternity* of the *world*, and reſolve this *conſent* wholly into mere *tradition*, *ſuch as the Fables of Poets were conveyed in from one to another*. For I demand concerning this *tradition*, Whether ever it had any *beginning* or no? If it had no *beginning*, it could be no *tradition*; for that muſt run up to ſome *perſons* from whom it firſt came; again, if it had no *beginning*, it was *neceſſary* that it ſhould always be, on the ſame accounts on which they make the World eternal. And if it be *neceſſary*, it muſt be *antecedent* to any free *act* of *man's will* which *tradition* ſuppoſeth; and ſo ſome falſe *opinion* would be found to be as *neceſſary* as the World's being *eternal*, (and by conſequence the World's being *eternal* may be a *neceſſary* falſe opinion) but if any *falſe opinion* be once granted *neceſſary*, it then follows that our *faculties* are not *true*, and that *nature* is a neceſſary cauſe of ſome *notorious falſity*, which is the higheſt *impeachment* the *Atheiſt* could have laid upon his only adored *Nature*; which muſt then have done that, (which *Ariſtotle* was aſhamed to think ever nature ſhould be guilty of) which is *ſomething in vain*; for to what *purpoſe* ſhould man have *rational faculties*, if he be under an unavoidable *neceſſity* of being *deceived*? If then it be granted that this *tradition* had once a *beginning*, either it *began* with *humane Nature*, or *humane Nature* did exiſt *long* before it; if it *began* with *mankind*, then *mankind* had a *beginning*, and ſo the *world* was not *eternal*; if *mankind* did *exiſt* before this *tradition*, I then enquire in what *time*, and by what *means*, came this *tradition* firſt to be embraced, if it doth not ſuppoſe the *exiſtence* of a *Deity*? Can any *age* be

be mentioned in *history*, wherein this tradition was not universally received? and which is most to our purpose, the further we go back in *history*, the fuller the *world* was of *Deities*, if we believe the *Heathen Histories*; but however no *age* can be *instanced* in, wherein this *tradition* began first to be *believed* in the World; we can trace the *Poetick Fables* to their true *original*, by the *testimonies* of *those* who believed them; we know the particular *Authors* of them, and what *course* they took in *divulging* of them; we find great *diversities* among themselves in the *meaning* of them, and many *nations* that never heard of them. But all things are quite otherwise in this *tradition*; we have *none* to fix on as the *first Authors* of it; if the *world* were *eternal*, and the *belief* of a *Deity* fabulous, we cannot understand by what *artifice* a fabulous *tradition* could come to be so universally received in the world, that no Nation of old could be instanced in by the *inquisitive Philosophers*, but however rude and barbarous it was, yet it owned a *Deity*. How could such a *tradition* be spread so far, but either by *force* or *fraud*? it could not be by *force*, because *embraced* by an unanimous *consent* where no *force* at all hath been used, and hath been so *rooted* in the very *Natures* of those *people* who have been most tender of their *liberties*, that they have *resented* no *indignity* so highly, as any *affronts* they conceived to be offered to their *Gods*. Nay, and where any *persons* would seem to quit the *belief* of a *Deity*, we find what *force* and *violence* they have used to their own reason and *Conscience* to bring themselves to *Atheism*, which they could not subdue their *minds* to any *longer* than the *will* could command the *understanding*, which when it gained but a little *liberty* to examine it *self*, or view the *world*, or was *alarmed* with *thunder*, *earth-quakes* or *violent sickness*, did bring back again the *sense* of a *Deity* with greater *force* and *power* than they had endeavoured to shake it off with. Now had this *tradition* come by force into the world, there would have been a secret *exultation* of *mind* to be *freed* from it, as we see *Nature* rejoyceth to *shake* off every thing which is *violent*, and to *settle* every thing according to its due order. It is only *fraud* then which can be with any *reason* Imagined in this case; and how unreasonable it is to imagine *it* here, will appear to any one who doth

conſider how extremely *jealous* the *world* is of being *impoſed* upon by the *ſubtilty* of ſuch who are thought to be the greateſt *Politicians*. For the very opinion of their *ſubtilty* makes them apt to ſuſpect a *deſign* in every thing they *ſpeak* or *do*, ſo that nothing doth more generally hinder the *entertaining* of any *motion* ſo much among *vulgar people*, as that it comes from a *perſon* reputed very *politick*. So that the moſt *politick* way of gaining upon the *apprehenſions* of the *vulgar*, is by taking upon one the greateſt *appearance* of *ſimplicity* and *integrity*; and this now could not be done by ſuch *Politicians* which we now ſpeak of, but by *accommodating* themſelves to ſuch *things* in the *people* which were ſo *conſonant* to their *Natures*, that they could ſuſpect no *deſign* at all in the *matters* propounded to them. And thus I aſſert it to have been in the preſent *caſe*, in all thoſe *Politick Governours* who at firſt brought the *world* into both *civil* and *religious Societies*, after they were grown *rude* and *barbarous*; for as it had been *impoſſible* to have brought them into *civil Societies*, unleſs there had been ſuppoſed an *inclination* to *Society* in them, ſo it had been equally *impoſſible* to have brought them to embrace any particular *way* of *Religion*, unleſs there had been a natural *propenſity* to *Religion* implanted in them, and founded in the general *belief* of the *exiſtence* of a *Deity*. And therefore we never find any of the ancient *founders* of *Common-wealths* go about to *perſwade* the *people* that there was a *God*, but this they ſuppoſed and made their *advantage* of it, the better to *draw* the *people* on to embrace that way of *worſhip*, which they delivered to them, as moſt ſuitable to their own deſign. And this is plainly evident in the vaſt difference of *deſigns* and *intereſts* which were carried on in the *Heathen world* upon this general apprehenſion of a *Deity*. How came the *world* to be ſo eaſily abuſed into *Religions* of all *ſhapes* and *faſhions*, had not there been a *natural inclination* in mens *ſouls* to *Religion*, and an *Indelible Idea* of a *Deity* on the *minds* of men? Were then this *propenſity groundleſs*, and this *Idea fictitious*, it were the greateſt *ſlur* imaginable, which could be caſt upon *Nature*, that when the *inſtincts* of *irrational agents* argue ſomething *real* in them; only *man* the moſt *Noble Being* of the *viſible world*, muſt be fatally *carried* to the *belief* of that which never *was*.

Which

Which yet hath so great a *force* and *awe* upon *man*, that nothing *creates* so great *anxieties* in his *life* as this doth; nothing lays him more open to the *designs* of any who have an intent to *abuse* him. But yet further, these *Politicians* who first abused the *world*, in telling them there was a *God*, did they themselves believe there was a *God* or no? If *they did*, then they had no such *end* as *abusing* the world into such a *belief*. If *they did not*, upon what *accounts* did they believe there was *none*, when the people were so ready to *believe* there was one? Was that as *certain* a *tradition* before that there was no *God*, as afterwards they made it to be that there was? *If so*, then all those *people* whom they *perswaded* to *believe* there was a *God*, *did before*, *all believe there was none*; and how can it possibly enter into the *reason* of any *man* to think, that *people* who had been brought up in the *belief* that there was no *God* at all, nor any *state* after this *life*, should all unanimously *quit* the *principles* of *education* which tended so much to their *ease* and *pleasure* here, to *believe* there was a *God* and another *life*, and thereby to fill themselves full of *fears* and *disquietments*, merely because their *Rulers* told them so? Again, if these *Rulers* themselves were so *wise* as not to believe a *Deity*, can we imagine there ever was such an *age* of the world wherein it fell out so happily, that only the *Rulers* were *wise*, and all the *subjects fools*? But it may be, it will be said, *that all who were wise themselves did not believe a Deity*, *but yet consented to the practice of Religion*, *because it was so useful for the Government of mankind*; but can it be thought that all these *wise men* which we must suppose of several *ranks* and *degrees*, (for *Philosophers* are not always *States-men*, nor *States-men Philosophers*) should so readily *concurr* in such a thing which tended most to the *Interest* of the *Prince*, and to the abuse of the *world*? Would *none* of them be ready to *assert* the *truth*, though it were but to make a *party* of their *own*, and *discover* to the people, that it was only the *ambition* and *design* of their *Governours* which sought to bring the people to *slavery* by the *belief* of such *things* which were contrary to the *tradition* of their *fore-fathers*, and would make their *lives*, if they believed them, continually *troublesom* and *unquiet*? Or if we could suppose *things* should hit thus in one *Nation*, what is this to the whole World which the *Atheist* here supposeth eternal? What, did all the *Rulers*

of

of the *world* exactly *agree* in one moment of time; or at leaſt in one *age* thus to abuſe the World? Did the *deſigns* of *Governours* and the *credulity* of all *people* fall out to be ſo *ſuitable* together? But on the contrary, we do not find that *Governours* can have the *judgments* of *people* ſo at their command, that they can make them to *believe* what they pleaſe; if it were ſo, we may well ſay with that *Atheiſtical Pope*, *Heu quam minimo regitur mundus*; *What a twine thread will rule the world!* But granting theſe things, (which any but an *Atheiſt* will ſay are *impoſſible*) yet whence ſhould it come to *paſs* that the *world* which is generally led more by the *opinions* of their *fore-fathers*, than by *reaſon*, ſhould ſo *cancel* that former *tradition* that there was no *God*, that no remaining *foot-ſteps* of it can be traced in any hiſtory of thoſe times? Or did the *Governors* all conſent to aboliſh all *records* of it? *Publick and written* I grant they might, but not *thoſe* out of men's *minds* and *memories*; which would have been for the *eaſe* of the *minds* of their *poſterity* conveyed in ſome ſecret *Cabala* from *Fathers* to their *Children*. It may be it will be ſaid, *ſo it was, but men durſt not profeſs it for fear of the Laws*; but, it is not evident that the *Laws* of all the ancient *Common-wealths* were ſo *ſevere* againſt *Atheiſm*, and withall how came ſome of the *wiſeſt* and moſt *Philoſophical* men of *Greece* and *Rome* to *embrace* the *exiſtence* of a *Deity* as a *thing* far more *conſonant* to *reaſon* than the contrary opinion, and eſtabliſhed their *belief* on ſuch *evidences* from *nature* it ſelf, that none of their *Antagoniſts* were able to anſwer them? It was not certainly the fear of *Laws* which made men *rational* and *inquiſitive* into the *natures* and *cauſes* of things; and yet thoſe who were *ſuch* amidſt the great *Idolatries* of the *Heathen*, and being *deſtitute* of *divine revelation*, yet freely and firmly *aſſented* to the *exiſtence* of a *Deity*. Had it been only *fraud* and *impoſture* which brought men to believe a *God*, whence came it to paſs that this *fraud* was not *diſcovered* by theſe *Philoſophers*, who were far better able by their *nearneſs* to thoſe eldeſt *times*, and much converſe *abroad* in other Nations (for ſome *travelled* into *Ægypt*, *Chaldea*, *Perſia*, *India*, merely to gain *knowledge*) to have found out ſuch an *impoſture*, had it been ſuch, than any of our modern *Atheiſts*? Whence come *theſe* now in this almoſt *decrepit age* of the *world* to be the firſt *ſmellers* out of ſo great a *deſign*? By what

means,

means, what *tokens* and *evidence* came such an *imposture* to their *knowledge*? *Because*, forsooth, *the world is still apt to be abused by a pretence of Religion*; but he that doth not see how silly and ridiculous a *Sophism* that is, either by his own *reason*, or by what hath gone before; hath *wit* and *reason* little enough to be an *Atheist*. Some therefore who would seem a little *wiser* than the *vulgar sort* of *Atheists* (for it seems there is a *vulgus* among them too, I wish it be more for their *meanness* than *multitude*) are so far *convinced* of the *unreasonableness* of *judging* that the *belief* of a *Deity* came in by *fraud*, that finding it so *general* and *universal*, they attribute it to as *general* and *universal* a *cause*, which is the *influence of the stars*. So true still is that of the *Poet*, *Cœlum ipsum petimus stultitia*; for by what imaginable *influence* come the *stars* to plant opinions in men's *minds* so deeply and universally? But yet further, is this *opinion* which is thus caused by the *stars*, *true* or *false*? if the opinion be *true*, we have what we desire; if *false*, what malignant *influence* is this of the *stars*, so powerfully to *sway* men to the *belief* of a *falsity*? How far are the *stars* then from doing *good* to mankind, when they are so *influential* to deceive the world; but then, by what peculiar *influence* come some men to be freed from this general *imposture*? If the cause be so *universal*, the *effect* must be *universal* too. But if only the *nativity* and *continuance* of some particular *religions* may be *calculated* by the *stars*, (as *Cardan* and *Vaninus*, atheistically *suppose*) whence then *comes* the general *propensity* and *inclination* to *Religion* in all *ages* and *nations* of the World? If it be then *caused* by the *Heavens* in general, it must be produced *necessarily* and *universally*, and so to be an *Atheist*, were *impossible*; if it be caused by the *influence* of some particular *stars*, then when that *influence* ceaseth, the world would universally *relapse* into *Atheism*. So that there is no possible way of *avoiding* this *universal consent* of *mankind*, as an *argument* that there is a *God*, when all the *pretences* of the *Atheist* against it are so *weak*, *ridiculous* and *impertinent*.

The only thing then left for him, is, to deny the *truth* of the thing, *viz. that there* is such an *universal consent*; because *some persons have been found in the world who have not agreed with the rest of mankind in this opinion.* To this I answer, (which was the second particular for clearing this argument) that *Sect.* 13.

2. that the *diſſent of theſe perſons is not ſufficient to manifeſt the conſent not to be univerſal, and to ariſe from a dictate of nature.* For I demand of the greateſt *Atheiſt*, Whether it be ſufficient to ſay, that it is not *natural* for men to have *two legs*, becauſe ſome have been *born* with *one*, or that it is not natural for men to *deſire life* (which the *Atheiſt* loves ſo dearly) becauſe there have been ſo *many* who have taken away their *own lives?* If it be ſaid that theſe are *Monſters* and *Anomaly's* in *nature*, and therefore not to be *reckoned* in the *regular account* of *things*, the ſame I may with as great *reaſon* ſay of *Atheiſts*, *that they are to be diſpunged out of the Cenſus of ſuch who act upon free principles of reaſon*; becauſe there may be ſome peculiar *reaſons* given of their *diſſent* from the *reſt* of mankind in the *denial* of a *Deity*. We ſee by the old *Philoſophers* how far the *affectation* of *Novelty*, and *ambition* of being *cried* up for no vulgar *wits*, may carry *men* to deny ſuch *things*, which are moſt *common* and *obvious* in the *world*. Is there any thing more plain and *evident* to *reaſon*, than that it implies a *contradiction for the ſame thing to be and not to be at the ſame time*, and yet if we believe *Ariſtotle*, who largely diſputes againſt them, *Metaphyſ. l.b. 4. cap. 4.* εἰσὶ δέ τινες οἱ αὐτοί τε ὑπολαμβάναι φασι τὸ αὐτὸ εἶναι καὶ μὴ εἶναι· *There was ſome who affirmed that a thing might be and not be at the ſame time.* What ſo evident in *nature* as *motion*, yet the *Philoſopher* is well known who diſputed againſt it, and thought himſelf *ſubtile* in doing ſo too? What are men more aſſured of, than that they *live*, and yet (if it be not too *dogmatical*, even in that to believe the *Scepticks*) it was a thing none could be aſſured of? What are our ſenſes more aſſured of than that the *ſnow* is *white*, yet all the *Philoſophers* were not of that opinion? Is this then ſufficient *reaſon* on which to deny an *univerſal conſent*, becauſe ſome *Philoſophers oppoſed* it, when *De Nat. Deor. lib. 3.* it is moſt undoubtedly *true*, which *Tully* ſharply ſpeaks of the ancient *Philoſophers*, *Nihil tam abſurdum quod non dixerit aliquis Philoſophorum*; *there was no abſurdity ſo great, but it found a Philoſopher to vouch it*: But in this caſe thoſe *Philoſophers* who queſtioned the *exiſtence* of a *Deity*, though they were not for *number* to be compared with *thoſe* who aſſerted it, yet were not ſo *inexcuſable therein* as our *modern Atheiſts*; becauſe they then knew no other way of *Religion*, but that which was joyned with *horrible ſuperſtition*, and *ridiculous rites* of *worſhip*; they were

were *strangers* to any *thing* of *divine revelation*, or to any *real miracles* wrought to confirm it, and to such a *way* of *serving God* which is most *agreeable* to the *Divine nature*, most *suitable* to our *reason*, most *effectual* for *advancing* true *goodness* in the *world*. And although this most *excellent Religion*, viz. the *Christian*, be subject to many *scandals* by *reason* of the *corruptions* which have been mixed with it by those who have *professed* it, yet the *Religion* it self is *clear* and *untainted*, being with great *integrity* preserved in the *sacred records* of it. So that now *Atheism* hath far less to plead for it *self* than it had in the *midst* of the *ignorance* and *superstition* of the *Heathen Idolatries*. But if we should grant the *Atheist* more than he can prove, That the *number* of such who denied a *Deity* hath been great in all *ages* of the world; is it *probable* they should speak the *sence* of *nature*, whose *opinion*, if it were embraced, would *dissolve* all *ties* and *obligations* whatsoever; would let the *world* loose to the highest *licentiousness*, without *check* or *controll*, and would in time *overturn* all *civil Societies?* For as *Tully* hath largely shewn, *Take away the being and providence of God out of the world, and there follows nothing but perturbation and confusion in it, not only all sanctity, piety and devotion is destroyed, but all faith, vertue and humane Societies too*; which are impossible to be upheld without Religion, as not only *he*, but *Plato*, *Aristotle* and *Plutarch*, have fully demonstrated. Shall such *persons* then who hold an *opinion* so *contrary* to all other *dictates* of *nature*, rather *speak* the *sence* of *nature*, than they who have *asserted* the *Belief* of a *Deity*, which tends so much to *advance nature*, to *regulate* the *world*, and to *reform* the *lives* of *men?* Certainly if it were not a *dictate* of *nature* that there was a *God*, it is impossible to conceive the *world* should be so *constant* in the *belief* of *him*, when the *thoughts* of him breed so many *anxieties* in mens *minds*, and withall, since *God* is neither *obvious* to *sense*, nor his *nature comprehensible* by *humane reason*. Which is a stronger *evidence* it is a *character* of himself which *God* hath *imprinted* on the *minds* of men, which makes them so unanimously *agree* that he *is*, when they can neither *see* him, nor yet fully *comprehend* him. For any *whole Nation*, which have *consented* in the *denial* of a *Deity*, we have no *evidence* at all; some *suspicions* it is true there were at first *concerning* some very *barbarous people* in *America*, but it is since evident,

De Nat. Deor. l. 1. & De Legibus, lib. 2.

though they are grosly mistaken as to the *nature* of *God*, yet they *worship* something instead of him, such as the *Toupinambaults*, *Caribes*, *Patagons*, *Tapuiæ*, and others; of the last of which *Vossius* from one *Christophorus Arcissewski*, a *Polonian Gentleman*, who was among them, hath given a large account of their *Religion*, and the *manner* of their *worshipping* of their *gods*, both *good* and *bad*. And that which among these *Indians* much confirms our present *argument*, is, That only *those* who have been the most *barbarous* and *savage Nations*, have been *suspected* of *irreligion*, but the more *civilized* they have been, the more evident their *sense* of Religion. The *Peruvians* worship one chief *God*, whom they call *Virachocha*, and *Pachacamak*, which is as much as *the Creator of Heaven and Earth*. And of the *Religion* of the *Mexicans*, *Lipsius* and others speak. So that the nearer any have approached to *civility* and *knowledge*, the more ready they have been to *own* a *Deity*, and none have had so little *sense* of it, as they who are almost degenerated to *Brutes*; and whether of these two now comes nearer to *reason*, let any one who hath *it* judge.

Addend ad l. 1. De Idol p. 2.

V. Acostam. l. 5. c. 3.

Lipsi. Monit. & exempl. Politic.

Sect. 14 2.

Another great *evidence*, that *God* hath *imprinted* a *character* or *Idea* of himself on the *minds* of men, is, *because such things are contained in this Idea of God, which do necessarily imply his existence.* The main force of this *argument* lies in this, *That which we do clearly and distinctly perceive to belong to the nature and essence of a thing, may be with truth affirmed of the thing*; not that it may be affirmed with *truth* to *belong to the nature of the thing*, for that were an empty *Tautology*, but it may be affirmed with *truth* of the *thing its self*, as if I clearly *perceive* upon exact *enquiry*, that to be an *animal* doth belong to the *nature* of *man*, I may with *truth* affirm that *man is a living creature*; if I find it *demonstrably* true that a *Triangle* hath *three angles equal to two right ones*, then I may truly affirm it of any *Triangle*; but now we assume, *that upon the most exact search and enquiry, I clearly perceive that necessary existence doth immutably belong to the nature of God*; therefore, I may with as much *truth affirm*, that *God exists*, as that *man is a living creature*; or, *a Triangle hath three angles equal to two right ones.* But because many are so apt to *suspect* some kind of *Sophism* in this *argument*, when it is *managed* from the *Idea* in mens *minds*, because that seems to imply only an *objective*

ctive reality in the mind, and that nothing can be thence inferred as to the *existence* of the thing whose *Idea* it is, I therefore shall indeavour to manifest more *clearly* the *force* of this argument, by proving severally the *suppositions* which it stands upon, which are these three: 1. *That clear and distinct perception of the mind is the greatest evidence we can have of the truth of any thing.* 2. *That we have this clear perception that necessary existence doth belong to the nature of God.* 3. *That if necessary existence doth belong to God's nature, it unavoidably follows, that he doth exist.* Nothing can be desired more plain or full to *demonstrate* the force of this *argument*, than by proving every one of these.

1. *That the greatest evidence we can have of the truth of a thing, is, a clear and distinct perception of it in our minds.* For otherwise the *rational faculties* of man's *soul* would be wholly *useless*, as being not *fitted* for any *end* at all, if upon a right *use* of them, *men* were still *liable* to be *deceived*. I grant the *imperfection* of our *minds* in this present *state* is very great, which makes us so *obnoxious* to *errour* and *mistake*; but then that *imperfection* lies in the *proneness* in man's *mind* to be *led* by *interest* and *prejudice* in the *judgment* of *things*; but in such *things* as are purely *speculative* and *rational*, if the *mind* cannot be *certain* it is not *deceived* in them, it can have no *certainty* at all of any *mathematical demonstrations*. Now we find in our own *minds* a *clear* and *convincing evidence* in some things, as soon as they are *propounded* to our *understandings*, as that a *thing can be and not be at the same time*; that *a non-entity can have no proper attributes*; that *while I reason and discourse, I am*; these are so *clear*, that no *man* doth suspect himself *deceived* at all in them. Besides, if we had no *ground* of *certainty* at all in our *judging* things, to what purpose is there an *Idea* of *true* and *false* in our minds, if it be impossible to know the *one* from the *other*? But I say not, that in all *perceptions* of the *mind* we have certain *evidence* of *truth*, but only in such as are *clear* and *distinct*; that is, when upon the greatest *consideration* of the *nature* of a *thing*, there appears no *ground* or *reason* at all to *doubt* concerning it; and this must *suppose* the *mind's abstraction* wholly from the *senses*; for we plainly find that while we *attend* to them, we may judge our selves very *certain* and yet be *deceived*, as those who have an *Icterism* in their *eyes*, may judge with much confidence that

they ſee *things* as *clearly* and *diſtinctly* as any other doth. Beſides, there are many things taken for granted by *men*, which have no *evidence* of *reaſon* at all in them: Now if men will *judge* of the *truth* of *things* by ſuch *principles*, no wonder if they be *deceived*. But when we ſpeak of *clear* and *diſtinct perception*, we *ſuppoſe* the *mind* to proceed upon evident *principles* of *reaſon*, or to have ſuch *notions* of *things*, which as far as we can perceive by the *light* of *reaſon*, do agree with the *natures* of the *things* we apprehend; if in ſuch things then there be no ground of *certainty*, it is as much as to ſay, our *faculties are to no purpoſe*; which highly reflects either upon *God* or *nature*. It is a noble *queſtion* as any is in *Philoſophy*, What is the certain κριτήριον of the *truth* of things, or what *ground* of *certainty* the *mind* hath to proceed upon in its *judgment* of the *truth* of ſuch *objects* as are repreſented to it? Nothing can render the *Philoſophy* of *Epicurus* more juſtly *ſuſpected* to any *rational* and *inquiſitive mind*, than his making the *ſenſes* the only certain *conveyers* of the *truth* of *things* to the *mind*. The *ſenſes* I grant do not in *themſelves* deceive any, but if I *make* the *impreſſions* of *ſenſe* to be the only *rule* for the mind to judge by of the truth of things, I make way for the greateſt *impoſtures*, and the moſt *erring judgments*. For if my mind affirms every *thing* to be in its proper *nature* according to that *Idea* which the *imagination* hath received from the *impreſſions* upon the *organs* of *ſenſe*, it will be *impoſſible* for me ever to underſtand the right *natures* of *things*. Becauſe the *natures* of *things* may remain the *ſame*, when all thoſe *things* in them which affect the *organs* of *ſenſe* may be altered, and becauſe the various *motion* and *configuration* of the *particles* of *matter* may make ſuch an *impreſſion* upon the *ſenſes*, which may cauſe an *Idea* in us of that in the *things* themſelves, which yet may be only in the *manner* of *ſenſation*; as ſome *Philoſophers* ſuppoſe it to be in *heat* and *cold*. Now if the *mind* judgeth of the *nature* of *things* according to thoſe *Idea's* which come from the *impreſſions* made upon the *organs* of *ſenſe*; how is it *poſſible* it ſhould ever come to a right *judgment* of the *natures* of things? So that in reference even to the groſſeſt *material beings*, it muſt be the *perception* only of the *mind*, which can truly inform us of their proper *nature* and *eſſence*. Beſides, there are many *Idea's* of *things* in the *mind* of *man* which are *capable* to have *properties demonſtrated* of them, which never

ver *owed* their *original* to our *senses*; and were never *imported* to the mind at the *Keys* of the *senses*. Such are most *Mathematical figures* which have their *peculiar properties* and *demonstrations*; such are all the *mutual respects* of *things* to each other, which may be as *certain* and *evident* to the *mind* as *its self* is; now it is plain by this, that all *certainty* of *knowledge* is not conveyed by the senses; but our truest way of certain *understanding* the *nature* of any *thing*, is by the *clear* and *distinct perception* of the *mind*, which is founded on the *Truth* of our *faculties*; and that however we may be *deceived* when we do not make a right *use* of our *reason*, because of the *imperfection* of our present *state*; yet if we say our *mind* may be deceived when *things* are evident and clear to them upon plain *principles* of *reason*, it is highly to reflect upon that *God* who gave men *rational faculties*, and made them capable of discerning *Truth* from *falshood*.

2. *That we have clear and distinct perception that necessity of existence doth belong to the nature of God.* For which we are to consider the vast *difference* which there is in our *notion* of the *nature* of *God*, and of the *nature* of any other *being*. In all other *beings*, I grant we may *abstract essence* and *existence* from each other; now if I can make it appear, that there is evident *reason*, *ex parte rei*, why I cannot do it in the *notion* of *God*, then it will be more plain that *necessity* of *existence* doth *immutably* belong to his nature. It is manifest to our *reason*, that in all other *beings*, which we apprehend the *natures* of, nothing else can be *implyed* in the *natures* of them beyond bare *possibility* of *existence*; no, although the *things* which we do apprehend, do *really exist*, because in forming an *Idea* of a thing, we abstract from every *thing* which is not implied in the very *nature* of the *thing*: now *existence* being only *contingent* and *possible*, as to any other *being*, it cannot be any *ingredient* of its *Idea*, because it doth not belong to its *essence*; for we may fully *apprehend* the *nature* of the *thing*, without attributing *existence* to it. But now in our *conception* of a *Being*, *absolutely perfect*, bare *possibility* or *contingency* of *existence* speaks a direct *repugnancy* to the *Idea* of *him*; for how can we conceive, that *Being absolutely perfect*, which may want that which gives *life* to all other *perfections*, which is *existence*? The only *scruple* which mens minds

minds are *subject* to in apprehending the *force* of this *argument* lies in this, Whether this *necessary existence doth really belong to the nature of that being whose Idea it is, or else it be only a Mode of our conception in apprehending God?* For clearing of this, we must consider by what certain *rules* we can know when the *composition* of *things* together in the *understanding* doth *depend* upon the *mere operation* of the *mind*, and when they do *belong* to the things themselves and their *immutable nature*. For which we have no *rule* so *certain* and *evident* as this is, that in those *things* which depend *merely* on the *act* of the *mind* joyning together, the *understanding* cannot only *abstract* one *thing* from *another*, but may really *divide* them in its *conceptions* from each other: but in such *things* which cannot be *divided* from each *other*, but the *essence* of the *thing* is *quite* altered, it is a certain *evidence* that those *things* were not *conjoyned* by the mere *act* of the *mind*, but do *immutably belong* to the *natures* of the *things* themselves. As for instance, when I conceive a *Triangle* inscribed in a *square*, a *man walking*, a *horse with wings*, it is evident I may *understand* the *natures* of all these *things* without these *affections* of them, because I can fully *apprehend* the *nature* of a *Triangle*, without imagining a *square*, a *man* without *walking*, a *horse* without *wings*; thence it necessarily follows, that the *joyning* of these *things* together, was *merely* an *act* of the *mind*; but now I cannot *conceive* a *Triangle* not to have *three angles equal to two right ones*, nor a *man* that hath not *rationality* belonging to him; for if I divide these *attributes* from them, I destroy their *natures*; and therefore the *joyning* of these together is not any mere *act* of the *mind*; but these are such *things* as are *implyed* in the very *notion* of them, and therefore *immutably* belongs to them. So now, when I conceive the notion of a *body*, I can imagine all *perfections belonging* to it, without *conceiving* it *necessarily* to *exist*; for it may be a *body* still, though it hath not its *being* from it *self*; but when I conceive a *Being absolutely perfect*, it is *impossible* to imagine it should have its *being* from any *other*; and if it be from its *self*, it must of *necessity exist*. For though the *mind* still be *apt* to doubt, whether *existence* in this *Idea* be only a *mode of cogitation*; yet that doubt may be easily removed, if the *mind* doth but *attend* to this, that at least *possibility* of

existence

existence doth belong to all those *Beings* which we have a clear *Idea* of in our *minds*; and the reason why we attribute bare *possibility* to them, is because we apprehend some *reason* in our *minds* which keeps us from *attributing necessity* of *existence* to them, as that it is not *implied* in its *nature*, or that it doth *depend* on some other *being*, or that it wants *infinite power*, &c. Now all these *reasons* which make us *attribute* bare *possibility* of *existence* to any *being*, are taken away when we conceive a *being absolutely perfect*; for then *existence* is implyed among the *number* of *perfections*; and this *being* is *independent*, upon all others, and *infinitely powerful*; so that *nothing* can hinder its *existence*; and therefore we must *conclude* that *necessity* of *existence* doth immutably belong to the *nature* and *notion* of *God*, and is not any *Mode* only of our *conception*; because if we take away *necessity* of *existence* from *God*, we lose the *notion* of a *Being absolutely perfect*.

The third thing, *that if necessary existence belongs to the nature of God, he doth exist*, not only *follows* as a necessary *conclusion* from the other two, as the premises, but is in *it self* evident to any ones *reason*; for it implies no less than a *contradiction* for a being to *exist necessarily*, and yet it be questionable, Whether he doth *exist* or no? Thus much I suppose may suffice here to *explain* and *enforce* this argument; if any are yet unsatisfied, I referr them to those *judicious Authors*, who have made it their peculiar *business* to manage it, and *vindicate* it from all *objections*: which falls in only here as an *evidence* that *God* hath imprinted a *character* of himself on the *minds* of *men*, seeing we have so *clear* and *distinct* an *Idea* of such a *Being*, from whom, if we take away *necessity* of *existence*, we destroy that *notion* which our *minds* have of an *absolutely perfect Being*. This is the *first way* whereby we can conceive an *Infinite Being* may make himself *known* to *mankind*, by *imprinting* an *Indelible character* of himself upon the *soul*, which can be *attributed* to *none* besides *himself* without doing *manifest violence* to our own *faculties*, and *suspecting* our *selves* deceived in *things* which are most clear and *evident* to us.

Vid. Des Cartes Metaphys. Medit. & Resp. ad Object. D. H. *More* Antidote against Atheism *lib.* 1. *ch.* 8. *append. ch.* 5, 6, 7.

I come to the second *evidence* which *God* hath given us of his own *existence*, which is the *mark*, and *impression which he hath left of an Infinite Wisdom and Counsel in the appearances which are in nature*. There needs no great *Criticism* to find out

Sect. 15.

out the true *Author* of all the *works* of *nature*; the *works* themſelves *ſhew* the *Author* as plainly, as if his *effigies* were *drawn* upon them. If the great *curioſity* and *contrivance* of any *artificial engine* ſpeak the *excellency* of the *Mechanical wit* of the framer of it; what ridiculous *folly* will it be to impute that rare *mechaniſm* of the *works* of *nature* to the *blind* and *fortuitous motion* of ſome *particles* of *matter*? Suppoſe a *multitude* of *letters* caſually *thrown* together, ſhould fall ſo *handſomely* in order, that we might read in them the *names* of *Troja*, *Juno*, *Æneas*, *Dido*, *Turnus*, *Aſcanius* or the like; is it *poſſible* for any to *imagine* that ever they ſhould reach the *grandeur*, *ſtile*, *matter* and *accuracy* of the whole *books* of the *Æneids*? So granting, that now *matter* being ſet in *motion* by a *divine power*, may by its continual *agitation*, at laſt produce ſome of the *appearances* of *nature*; yet what is this to the *whole Univerſe*, or the *admirable contrivance* of any one *part* in it? If theſe *things* had been the *reſult* of mere *matter* and *motion*, when once the *particles* of *matter* had been ſo *united* and *ſetled* together, as to *produce* any one *ſpecies* of *animals* in the *world* (which it is almoſt unconceivable they ſhould) yet we cannot *think* that if there had been but *ſymmetry* of *parts* enough for it merely to *ſubſiſt* its ſelf, and *propagate* more, there could have been any further *Attempt* made by thoſe *Atoms*, which had been once ſetled in a *determinate figure*. How came it then to paſs that there is not *any one ſpecies* of *animals* in the *world*, but what hath ſuch an *order*, *ſymmetry* and *contrivance* of *parts*, which ſpeaks more than mere *neceſſity* of *ſubſiſtence*, and therefore ſpeaks *them* to be the *effects* of a *ſupream Governour* of the *world*, and not the *products* of mere *matter*? Is it *poſſible* that any, who is not before-hand reſolved to *exclude a Deity*, ſhould imagine that any *particles* of *matter* ſhould fall into the exact *form*, *order*, *motion*, and *ſerviceableneſs* to the *world* which the *Heavenly bodies* are in, without *divine counſel* and *wiſdom* diſpoſing of them? *Tully* tells us of a *ſpeech* of *Ariſtotle* to this purpoſe; *If we could ſuppoſe perſons to have lived in ſome caverns of the earth, and to have enjoyed every thing there of pleaſure, and riches, or whatever it is which we think makes mens lives happy, and had never been abroad upon the ſurface of the earth, but had only had ſome obſcure report of*

De Nat. Deor. l. 2. c. 95.

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an infinite Power and Being; and that afterwards these persons should by an opening of the caverns wherein they were, come abroad into these parts of the world, and should suddenly behold the Earth, Sea, and the Heavens, and observe the vastness of the clouds, and violence of winds, and behold the bigness, beauty, and influence of the Sun, and how the day depended upon his presence, and upon his withdrawing should view the face of the Heavens again (as it were the second *course* of *nature*) *the order and ornament of the Stars, the varieties of the light of the Moon, their rising and setting, and their fixed and immoveable courses, they could not hold from believing there was a Deity, and that these were the effects of his power.* So vastly different are the *free* and *natural emanations* of our *souls*, from that which we *force* and *strain* out of our *selves* by *distorting* and *wringing* those free *principles* of *reason* which *God* hath given us. When a few sorry *experiments* and some *arbitrarious hypotheses*, must make us *form* other *conceptions* of things, than the *majesty*, *order* and *beauty* of them do naturally *suggest* to us: We see when once we can but *abstract* our minds from those *prejudices* which continual *conversation* with the *world* brings upon us, by that speech of *Aristotle*, how readily our *minds* will frame an *excellent commentary* upon those words of the royal *Psalmist*, *The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament shews his handy-work.* To which purpose likewise those words of the excellent *Orator* himself in another place are very observable; *Quid est enim verius quam neminem esse oportere tam stulte arrogantem, ut in se mentem & rationem putet inesse, in cœlo mundoque non putet? aut ea quæ vix summa ingenii ratione comprehendat, nulla ratione moveri putat? quem vero astrorum ordines, quem dierum noctiumque vicissitudines, quem mensium temperatio, quemque ea quæ gignuntur nobis ad fruendum, non gratum esse cogant, hunc hominem omnino numerare qui dicet? What monstrous arrogancy would it be in any man to think there is a mind and reason in himself, and that there is none in the world? Or to think those things are moved without reason and understanding, which all that he hath is scarce able to comprehend? Neither can he deserve the name of a man, from whom the observation of the courses of the stars, the succession and order of seasons, and the innumerable benefits which he enjoys in the world, does not extort gratitude towards* *De Legibus, l. 2.*

that Being which ordered all these things. What a low opinion then had those more refined and *generous spirits* who went only upon *principles* of *pure* and *undistorted reason*, of those *mean* and *ignoble souls*, which were *inclined* to *Atheism*; especially then, when *Religion* was so *abused*, that it was *true* of the wisest of them, what one said of *Erasmus*, *Magis habuit quid fugeret quam quid sequeretur*, they knew what to *avoid*, but not what they should *embrace*: And yet when they saw so much into the *folly* and *superstition* of *Heathen worship*, they saw the greatest *reason* still to adhere to the *belief* of a *Deity*, as may be clearly seen, especially in the *second* of those *excellent Dialogues* of *Tully*, *De Natura Deorum*. Where this particular *argument* to prove a *Deity* from the *admirable* contrivance of the *works* of *nature*, is managed with a great deal of *eloquence* and *reason*, and by particular *enumeration* of most considerable *parts* of the *Universe*. So *unbecoming* a late *Philosopher* was that *reason* of his, why he *waved* the *argument* from the *consideration* of the *world*, to *infer* a *Deity*, because the *ends of God are unsearchable*, *as flowing from his Infinite wisdom*. For, what though *God* may *conceal* some things from men, which he intends, and are of no *concernment* for man to *know*, must therefore of *necessity* those *ends* of his be *unsearchable* in his *works* of *Creation*, which refer so *immediately* to the *advantage* of *life*, and *tend* so much to the *veneration* of the *Deity*?

Sect. 16. Nay, the peculiar *use* and *serviceableness* of many *parts* of the *Universe*, especially of *Animals*, and chiefly of *man*, is so evident, that this hath been the main *argument* which hath induced some, otherwise *atheistical* enough, to *acknowledge* and *adore* a *Deity*. And although the *Epicureans* be lamentably *puzzled* to give any tolerable *account* of many other *appearances* in *nature*, yet they no where discover so much *weakness* and *ignorance*, as when they come to discourse *De usu partium*, about the *contrivance* of the *parts* of *man's body*. Whose opinion is thus briefly delivered by *Lucretius*;

Lucret. l. 4. *Nil ideo quoniam natum'st in corpore ut uti*
Possemus; sed quod natum'st id procreat usum.

i.e. *that no parts of man's body were designed for that use which they are imployed for, but the parts by chance fell into that form they*

they are in, and men by degrees brought them to their present use and serviceableness. An *opinion* at first view so strangely *unreasonable*, that we cannot think *Epicurus* should have ever embraced it, had it not unavoidably *followed* upon his *hypothesis* of all *things* in the *Universe* resulting only from a *fortuitous concourse* of *atoms*: According to which he supposed in man a *different configuration* of *parts* would happen from the various *agitation* and *concretion* of those little *particles* which at first *run* together in the *fashion* of a *man*; and because that *man* had in him a more *florid* and *vivacious spirit*, made up of the most *subtle* and *movable atoms*, thence *motion* came into the several *parts* suitable to the *different conformation* of them. And because those *atoms* of which the *soul* is composed, are capable of *sensation*, thence it comes to pass, that it *sees* in the *eye*, *hears* in the *ear*, and *smells* in the *nostrils*. This is the most which is made of the opinion of *Epicurus* by the late *sedulous* Vindicator of him, which yet himself calls *intoleranda opinio*; and it will appear to be so, not only as contradicting, what *God* himself hath delivered concerning *man*, but what *reason* it self will easily *suggest* from the *consideration* of the several *parts* of *man's body*. It must be confessed there were some *Philosophers* elder than *Epicurus*, who were much *inclined* to this opinion, as *Democritus*, *Empedocles*, *Anaxagoras*, and others; yet we find those who more narrowly searched into the *natures* of *living creatures*, were thereby brought to acknowledge a *divine providence*, which with a great deal of *wisdom* did order the several *parts* of *animals*, and adapted them to their peculiar *uses*. And although *Aristotle* in his books *de partibus animalium*, hath said enough to refute the fond *opinion* of those *Philosophers*; yet none hath handled this *argument* with more *exactness* and *accuracy*, and with a more peculiar reflection on *Epicurus*, than *Galen* hath done in his *excellent piece De usu partium*. Which *Gassendus* thinks *Galen* writ with a kind of *Enthusiasm* upon him (*totum opus videtur conscriptum* ἐνθουσιαστικῶς) and so that all those *seventeen books* of his on that subject, are a kind of 119th *Psalm* in *Philosophy*, or a *perpetual Hymn* upon the *praise* of the great *Creator*; a just *Commentary* on those words of the *Psalmist*, Psal. 139. 14. *I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works, and that my Soul knoweth right well.*

Gassend. To. 2. adeo lib. 2. sect. 3.

In the entrance of those *Books*, *Galen first* shews the great *variety* of *parts* which is in several *animals* suitable to their several *natures*; the *horse* because of his *swiftness* and *pride*, hath the strongest *hoofs* and most *curled main*; the *Lion* because of his *fierceness* and *courage* hath his *strength lying* in his *teeth* and *paws*; the *Bull* in his *horns*; the *Boar* in his *tusks*; the *Hart* and *Hare* being *timorous creatures*, their *parts* are made *fittest* for *flight*: but *man* because he hath a *principle* of *reason* in him, hath no *defensive* or *offensive* weapons in his *body*, but he hath *hands* to make *use* of both; which being joyned with, and imployed by his *reason*, far *exceed* all those *advantages* which any other *creatures* have, being *imployed* not only to *defend* himself, but to *build houses*, *make cloaths*, *arms*, *nets*, what-ever is usefull for himself, or *hurtfull* to those *creatures* which he hath command over; but because *man* was made for *society* and *civil converse*, therefore his *hands* were not only *imployed* to defend himself or hurt other creatures, but for the mutual *benefit* and *advantage* of *mankind*; for by these were *Laws written*, *Temples built*, all *instruments* of *Arts* framed; by *them* we enjoy the *benefit* of others *wits*, we can discourse with *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Hippocrates*, and other *ancients*, though at such a distance from us. Now that the *configuration* of *parts* is not the *cause* of the *use* of them afterwards; as the *Lion's paw* of his *courage*, the *Bull's horns* of his *fierceness*, or the *slenderness* of the *Hart* of its *fearfulness*; appears by this, because the young *ones* of the several *kinds* of *animals*, before their *parts* are *grown* up, strive to make the same *use* of them which the *others* doe. As *Galen* saith, he had often seen a *Bull-calf pushing* with his *head* before any *horns* were grown out, and a *Colt kicking* when his *hoofs* were yet *tender*, and a young *Boar* defending himself with his *jaws* before he had any *tusks*, which is an evident argument that the parts were designed for the *use*, and not the *use* to follow the parts. *So*, saith he, *take three Eggs, one of an Eagle, another of a Duck, and a third of a Serpent, and after they are hatched through a moderate heat, we shall find when they are but newly hatched, the two first will be striving to fly before they have wings, and the third endeavouring to creep away on its belly; and if you breed them up to greater perfection, and bring them into the open Air, you will presently see the young Eagle mounting into the*

the Air, the Duck quoddling into a pool, and the Serpent creep under ground. Afterwards he comes particularly to handle the several *parts* of man's body, and first begins with the *Hand*, and shews in each part that it were *impossible* to have framed them with greater *conveniency* for their several *uses* than they have. The *use* of the *hand* is to *take hold* of any thing which man can *use*; now there being *things* of such *different sizes* which men may *use*, it had been *impossible* for the *hand*, if it had been one *entire thing*, and *undivided*, that it could have held *things greater* or *lesser* than its self, but it must have been *equal* to it. But now as the *fingers* are *placed* and *divided*, they are equally *fit* for laying *hold* of *objects* of any *size* or *quantity*; For the least *things* as a *Barley Corn*, are *taken* up with the *fore-finger* and the *thumb*, things somewhat *bigger* are taken up by the *same*, but not by the *extremities* of them as before; things somewhat *bigger* than *these*, with the *thumb*, *fore-finger* and *middle-finger*, and so on by *degrees*, till at last the whole *hand* is *used*; so that the *division* of the hand into *fingers* is necessary. Neither were this enough, but the very *position* of the *fingers* as they are, is necessary too; for they had been *useless* if they had been all *divided* in a *right line*; for the firmest *hold* is either *circular*, or at least in two opposite points; but now this is *provided* for, by the *position* of the *thumb*, which may equally *joyn* with any of the *fingers* in taking hold of any thing. After this, he largely shews the particular *necessity* of the *softness*, *roundness* of the flesh, and *nails* on the *tops* of the *fingers*; and the special *usefulness* of these; and then comes to the *bones* of the *fingers*, how necessary they are for *firm-hold*, and if there had been but *one bone* in each *finger*, they would have served only for those *things* which we take up when they are *extended*; but now seeing they have *three* several *joynts*, they are *fitted* for all *kinds* of things; for when we *bow* our *fingers*, we use them as though they had no *bones* at all, and when we *stretch* them *out*, as though they were all but one *entire bone*; and the several *inflections* of the *joynts* serve for all *kind* of *figures*: and then he shews the *necessity* of the *flesh within* the fingers, and on either *side* of them, and *upon* them; and so with wonderful *accuracy* handles the *magnitude*, *number*, *figure* of the *bones*, and *nature* of the *joynts* of the fingers, and then the

tendons

tendons and *muſcles* belonging to the ſeveral *fingers*, which after he hath diſcourſed on through his *firſt Book*, he concludes it with the *manifeſt inconveniency* which would *follow* in the *hand*, were not every *thing* in it in that exact *magnitude*, *poſition*, and *figure* in which it is. With the ſame *exactneſs* he goes through all the *parts* of the *body*, handling in the *ſecond* Book all that belongs to the *arm*, in the *third* the *legs*, in the *fourth* and *fifth* the *Organs* of *nutrition*, in the *ſixth* and *ſeventh* the *lungs*, in the *eighth* and *ninth* the *Head*, in the *tenth* the *peculiar* and *admirable fabrick* of the *eyes*, in the *eleventh* the other *parts* of the *face*, in the *twelfth* the *parts* of the *back*, and ſo in the *thirteenth*, in the *fourteenth* and *fifteenth* the *genitals*, in the *ſixteenth* the *arteries*, *veins*, and *nerves*, and in the laſt the *peculiar diſpoſition* and *figure* of all theſe *parts*, and the *uſefulneſs* of the whole *deſign*: Which is as *great* as can be in any *work* whatſoever, which is for us to take *notice* of the *admirable wiſdom of God* in *contriving* the ſeveral *parts* of the *body of man*: So that, that whole *book* contains in it a moſt *full* and *pregnant demonſtration* of a *Deity*, which every man carries about with him in the *ſtructure* of his *body*, on which account men need not go out of themſelves to find *proof* of a *Deity*, whether they conſider their *minds* or their *bodies*, of which it may be more truly ſaid than *Heraclitus* of old did of his *Stove*, *Etiam hic Dii ſunt.* So that of all *perſons*, I ſhould moſt wonder at *thoſe* whoſe *imployment* particularly leads them to the *underſtanding* the *parts* and *nature* of *man's* body, if the *proverb* be not a great *injury* to *them*, ſince they have fuller *inſight* into this *demonſtration* of a *Deity* in the *Fabrick* of mans *body*, than many *others* who *converſe* only with ſome *jejune* and *ſapleſs writings*. And certainly, whatever is *imagined* to the *contrary* by men of weak *underſtandings*, the beſt *way* to cure the *world* of *Atheiſm*, is *true Philoſophy*, or a *ſearch* into the *natures* of *things*; which the more *deep* and *profound* it is, the more *impoſſible* will it be found to *explicate* all the *phænomena* of *nature* by mere *matter* and *motion*. It was wiſely obſerved of a great *perſon* and *Philoſopher*, that a *narrow* and *ſlight inſpection* into *nature*, inclined men of *weak heads* to *Atheiſm*; but a more thorow-*inſight* into the *cauſes* of *things*, made them more evidently *ſee* the *neceſſary dependance* of things on the

Ariſtot. de part. Anim. l. 1.

great

great and *wise Creator* of them. A little *knowledge* of *Philosophy* is apt to make mens *heads dizzy*, and then in danger of *falling* into the *gulf* of *Atheism*; but a more *careful* and diligent *view* of it, brings them into *sobriety* and their right *wits* again. Such a slight *inspection* had the *followers* of *Epicurus* into the *nature* of *things*; for when they found how in the present *state* of the world the various *motion* and *configuration* of the *particles* of *matter* would handsomely *salve* many *appearances* of *nature*, they, *drunk* with the *success*, reel presently into an *Infinite space*, and there imagine they behold *infinite worlds* made of the *concretion* of *Atoms*, and ever since their *eyes* have been so *dusted* with these little *Atoms*, that they could see nothing else in the *world* but them. Which how *gross* and *unreasonable* it is, will appear from our present *subject*; for who but *Lucretius* or *Epicurus* could ever think *that our nostrils were at first fashioned as they are merely by the violent impulse of the air within, which would force it self a passage out*? But how came the *air* into the *body* before it was *forced* out? did it first break open the *lips*, make all that *round* cavity in the *mouth*, for a *passage* through the *aspera arteria*? but if when it was in, it would come out again, was not the *mouth* wide enough to let it go? or did the first *man shut* his *mouth* on purpose to find another *vent* for the *air*? if so, how *chance* the *force* of the *air* did not carry away the *epiglottis*? or if it got safely up to the *nose*, how came it not to *force* a *passage* out about the *eyes* rather than to go *down* so *low* first? But if we believe these rare *contrivers* of *man's body*, all the *inward vessels of the body were made by the course of water, as channels are*; but how is it possible, to imagine that the *Oesophagus* and the *stomach* should be so curiously *contrived* by the mere force of *water*? and that all the *Intestines* should be made only as *channels* to let it out again when it was once in? but how comes then such a kind of *reciprocation* and *Peristaltick motion* in those *vessels*? how come the several *coats* of them to be so *firm*? if it had been only a forced *passage*, it would have been direct and through the *substance* of the *parts*, as we find it to be in all *forced passages* in the *body* of the *earth*. Besides, if the *water* received into the *stomach* forced the *passage* through the *guts*, how comes it not to *run* in the *channel* it had made for it *self*? or did it not like that *passage* when

when other *things* came into it, and therefore found out a more *ſecret* one into the *bladder*? but if that were made by the *water*, how came it to be ſo full of *membranes*, and ſo *ſubject* to *dilatation*? Thus *ridiculous* will men make themſelves, rather than *ſhew* themſelves *men* in *owning* and *adoring* that *infinitely wiſe* and *powerful God*, who *orders all things in the world according to the counſel of his Will*. What can be more *plain* and *evident* than the peculiar *uſefulneſs* of the ſeveral *parts* of *mans body* is? What other *intent* can be imagined that *man* is *formed* with a *mouth*, but only for *taking* in of *nouriſhment*, and for *receiving* and *letting forth* of *air*? or that an *infant* is ſo ready to *open* his *mouth*, but that there are *breaſts* and *milk* for him to ſuck in order to his *nouriſhment*? Why ſhould the *Oeſophagus* be ſo *hollow* and the *ſtomach* ſo *wide*, but that *one* was provided for the better *conveyance* of the *meat* down, and the other for the *fermentation* of it? Whence come all the other *veſſels* to be ſo conveniently placed, were it not for the *diſtribution* of *nouriſhment* into the ſeveral parts, or for *conveying* away the *excrements* of it? Can any one think that the ſeveral *muſcles* and *tendons* ſhould be placed in the more ſolid *parts* for any other end than for the better *motion* of them? or that the *nerves* ſhould be derived from the *brain* into the ſeveral *parts* of the *body* for any other *deſign* than to be the *inſtruments* of *ſenſe* and *motion*? or that the continual *motion* of the *heart* ſhould be for any other *purpoſe*, than for *receiving* and *diſtribution* of the *blood* through the *arteries* into the *parts* of the *body*? or that the *eye* with all its curious *fabrick* ſhould be only *accidentally imployed* in *ſeeing*? Theſe things are ſo plain, that however the *Epicureans* may more eaſily *loſe* themſelves and *deceive* others in *explaining* the *appearances* of *nature* in ſome *inanimate beings*, yet when they come with their *blind concourſe* of *Atoms* to give an *account* of the *parts* of *animals*, they miſerably *befool* themſelves and expoſe themſelves only to *contempt* and *pity*. It were eaſie to multiply *examples* in this *kind*, but I ſhall only mention one thing more, which is, if all the *parts* of *mans body* have no higher *original* than the *concourſe* of *Atoms* in the firſt *man* and *woman*, by what were the *umbilical veſſels* formed whereby the *Child* in the *womb* receives its *nouriſhment*? by what *Atoms* was the paſſage of the

the *succus nutritius* framed from the *Mother* to the *Child*? how come those *vessels* to *close* up so naturally upon the *birth* of the *Child*, and it to *seek* its *nourishment* in quite another way? Will the *particles* of *matter* which by their *concretion* formed the first pair, salve this too? Thus still we see how *impossible* it is (to go no further than our *selves*) to give any tolerable *account* of things without an *infinite power* and *Being* which produced all these things, and hath left so plain an *inscription* of *himself* upon the works of *nature*, that none but those who *shut* their *eyes* can *abstain* from *seeing* it.

I come now to the third *evidence* of a *Deity*, which is, *that there are some beings in the world which cannot depend upon matter or motion, i. e.* that there are some *spiritual* and *immaterial Substances* or *Beings* (for if the thing be acknowledged, it is unbecoming a *man* to contend about words) the consequence of this for the proving a *Deity*, neither hath *been* nor I suppose will be denied by such who question an *infinite Being*, the same *principles leading* to the *denying* and the *proof* of both, and *immaterial Beings* being the strongest proof that there is something above *matter* in the *world*. If there be then such things in the World which *matter* and *motion* cannot be the causes of, then there are certainly *spiritual* and *immaterial Beings*, and that I shall make appear both as to the *minds* of *men*, and some *extraordinary effects* which are produced in the world. *Sect.* 17 3.

1. I begin with the *nature of the soul of man*. And herein I must confine my self to those *arguments* which directly prove my present *purpose*, and on that account must quit all those common *arguments* to prove the *soul's immortality* from the *attributes* of *God*; for all these do suppose the *existence* of a *Deity* as already evident; neither can I rely with *safety* on the way which some have taken to *prove* the *immortality* of the *soul* merely from the *phænomena* of *sensation*, which they endeavour to prove cannot be performed by mere *matter* and *motion*; for granting all this, yet the utmost that can be proved by it is no greater *immortality* in our *souls* than in the *souls* of *Brutes*; and in the sence in which that is *admitted*, I suppose an *Epicurean* will not deny the *soul* of *man*, to be *immortal* as *Demonax* in *Lucian* said, when he was asked whether the *soul* were *immortal* or no, *it is* (said he) *but as*

all things else are; for those who make the *soul* to be *nothing* but some more *subtle* and *active particles* of *matter*, do not think that upon *death* they are *annihilated*, but that only they are *dispersed* and *dissipated*, or in the *Platonists* phrase, may *return to the soul of the world*. These *ways* I cannot think to be sufficient *probations* of such a *spiritual* and *immaterial Being* in *man* which we now enquire for; much less can I make use of so *precarious* and *infirm* an *hypothesis* as *præ-existence*, which makes men apt to suspect the *cogency* of such *reasons* which tend to prove the *immortality* of the *soul*, which are *linked* with a *supposition*, not only *inevident* either to *sense* or *reason*, but likewise *needless* and *impertinent*. For I know no one *argument* which doth directly prove the *immateriality* of the *soul*, that doth in the least *infer* any *necessity* of *præ-existence*, but on the same *accounts* it will prove the soul's *eternity*. Being therefore thus at *liberty* to *enquire* into the *nature* of the *soul* considered in her *self*, our only way must be to find out such peculiar *properties* in the *soul* of *man*, which cannot be *salved* on *supposition*, there were nothing else but *matter* and *motion* in the *world*. Supposing then that all *sensation* in man doth arise from *corporeal motion*, which is so strongly asserted by the *modern Philosophers*, and that the *highest conceptions* which depend on sense can amount no higher than *imagination*, which is evident; if it can then be proved that there is a principle of *action* in *man* which proceeds in a different *way* of *operation* than *sensation* doth, and that there are such *operations* of the *soul* which are not *imaginations*, it will be then *clear* that there is a *principle* in man higher than *matter* and *motion*. Now although it be a *task* sufficiently *difficult* to *explain* the *manner* of *sensation* it self in a mere *mechanical way*, supposing no higher *principle* than mere *matter*, yet it will appear far more *difficult*, nay *impossible* without a *spiritual* or immaterial *Being* to salve such appearances in man which *transcend* the *power* of *imagination*; which will appear by these following *operations* of the mind which every one who hath it, may find within himself.

1. *Correcting the errors of imagination.* For if all our *perceptions* were nothing else but the *images* of *corporeal things* left in the *brain*, the *judgment* of the *mind* must of *necessity* be according to the *impressions*, which are made upon the

Organs

Organs of *sense*. But now if our *minds can* and *do form apprehensions* of *things* quite *different* from those which are conveyed by *sense*, there must be a *higher principle* of *knowledge* in *man* than *imagination* is. For which the common instance of the just *magnitude* of the *Sun* is very plain; If we judge according to the *image* which is conveyed to the *brain* by our *eyes*, we can never *imagine* the *Sun* to be *bigger* than he seems to us to be? nay though the *sight* be advantaged by the *help* of *Telescopes*, it cannot receive such an *Image* or *Idea* of the *Sun* which answers to its just *magnitude*, *viz.* that it is 160 times *bigger* than the *Earth*. From whence now comes this *apprehension* of the *bigness* of the *Sun* above that *proportion* which can possibly come in at our *senses*? If it be said, *that by the observation of the lessening of objects according to the proportion of distance, the mind may come to understand how much bigger the Sun may be than he seems*, I grant it, but withal *enquire* how the *imagination* comes to have *proportions* and *distances* which are mere *respects*, and can have no *corporeal phantasms* whereby to be *represented* to it; so that by this very way of *ratiocination* it is *evident*, that there is some *principle* in *man* beyond *imagination*. Again, when the *mind* by *ratiocination* hath proceeded thus far and finds the *Sun* to be so *great*, what *Idea* is there of this *magnitude* in the *mind*? the *mind* cannot fix it *self* on any *thing* but it must have an *Idea* of it; from whence comes this *Idea*? not from *corporeal phantasms*; for none of them could ever convey the due *magnitude* of the *Sun* to the *mind*, and therefore the *forming* of this *Idea* must be a pure *act* of *Intellection* which *corrects* the *errors* of *imagination*, and is a *principle* above it. So in the *sight* of a *stick*, when under *water*, the *representation* of it by the *sense* to *imagination* is as *crooked*; for *corporeal motion* carries things to the *eye*, without any *judgment* upon them; the *eye conveys* the *image* to the *brain*, and according to the *rules* of *corporeal perception* must presently take every *thing* for *true* which is *conveyed* thither; now from what *principle* is it that this *error* of our senses is *corrected*? So in many other things wherein our *imaginations* are quite *puzled*, and when we go according to them, it is *impossible* to apprehend things as our reason tells us they are; thus as to the *Antipodes* our *imaginations* are wholly of the *mind* of the *ancients*,

that the *Antipodes* to us muſt needs be in *danger* of *knocking* their *heads* againſt the *Stars*, and if they *go* upon any thing, it muſt be their *heads*, and that that part of the *Heavens* which is in the other *Hemiſphere* is below us; theſe are *pertinacious errors* of *imagination* while we *adhere* to that, and are only *corrigible* by our *reaſon*, which makes it *evident* to be otherwiſe. Beſides, there are many *things* our *reaſon* and *underſtanding inform* us that they *may be*, and yet our *imaginations* can *form* no *Idea* of them; let an *Epicurean* Philoſopher try the *power* of his *imagination* in his *Inane* or *Infinite empty ſpace*, and he will ſoon find, that as *ſtrong* as his *Phancy* is, it will ſoon *tire* and *retreat* as not being able to *courſe* through ſo *unimaginable* a *Space*. So for *eternal duration* our *reaſon* tells us the *thing* is *poſſible*, but when our *imaginations* begin to *fradle* up ſome *conceptions* of it, they are preſently *tying* both *ends* together; which will make a ſtrange *Idea* of *eternity*; the caſe is the ſame in the *infinite diviſibility* of *quantity*, which *Epicurus* was ſomewhat *aware* of when he *denied* the *thing*. But how many *Mathematical Problems* are there which will *jade* our *imaginations* preſently, and yet our *reaſon ſtands* ſtill and *aſſures* us of the *poſſibility* of the things, as in *two lines coming nearer ſtill to each other, and yet never meeting*, and in many other *things*, which moſt clearly *evidence* that there is a higher *faculty* in *man* which exceeds *matter* and *motion*, when it is able thus to correct the *faults* and to ſupply the *defects* of *imagination*.

Sect. 18. 2. *Reflex acts of the mind upon it ſelf*, argue a higher *principle* than *imagination*. That there are ſuch *things* are evident to any one who hath any *uſe* of *cogitation*; and if any one doubt of it, his very *doubting* argues he hath *reflex acts*; for he could not *doubt* whether he *had* or *no*, but by *reflection* upon *himſelf*. Now that *reflex acts* ſhould be cauſed through *matter* and *motion*, or through mere *imagination* is *unconceivable*. For we ſee no *matter* can *act* upon it *ſelf*; indeed one *part* of *extended matter* may act upon *another*, but not *purely* upon it *ſelf*; the *extremities* of the *fingers* can never *feel* themſelves, though they may *touch* each other; neither can *imagination reflect* on it *ſelf*; for that proceeding upon *corporeal images*, muſt have ſuch a *repreſentation* from the *ſenſes* of what it acts upon;

now

now what *image* of it *self* can be *conveyed* to the *imagination* through the external *organs* of *sense*? The *eye* may *see* through the *motion* of the *objects* of *sight pressing* upon it; but how can it *see* that it *sees*? so the *imagination* receives the *images conveyed* to the *brain*; but what *shop* hath it to make new *ones* in of *it self*, and so be guilty of the *greatest Idolatry* of *worshipping* its *own Image*? But though the *imagination* cannot thus *reflect*, yet we find such a *principle* within *us* that is very *apt* to *retire* into it *self*, and *recollect things* which could never have been *conserved* so long in that *shop* of *shadows*, the *Imagination*. For if *imagination* be nothing else but as a modern *Philosopher* defines it, *conception remaining, and a little and little decaying from and after the act of sense, like the motion of water after a stone is thrown into it*, how is it possible that at so great a *distance* of *years*, as we commonly find, the *image* of a *thing* may be *retrieved* with as much *facility* and *freshness* as to *circumstances*, as if it were but new done? and that *account* which he gives of *remembrance* is very *weak* and *insufficient*, when he tells us, that *remembrance is nothing else but the missing of parts, which every man expecteth should succeed after they have a conception of the whole*. For according to this, it is *impossible* for the *men* to *retrive* any *object* without *mutilation* of it; and so there cannot *possibly* be a *recollecting* of all *circumstances*, when an *object* is once *passed*, and the *motion* begins to *decay*. But all this while, we understand *nothing* by what means this *decaying* motion should *continue* so long as our *memory* can fetch things *back*, or by what *means* an *object* when once *passed*, can be *recovered* again, if *memory* be nothing else but *decaying motion*. Such *perplexities* must needs arise, when *men* will undertake to *salve* the *inward operations* of the *soul* by *mere motion*; but is it not evident that many times when the *mind* is *imployed* about other things, some *phantasms* of *things* long ago *past* will *come* and *present* themselves to the *mind* with as much *clearness* as if new done? whereas if *memory* were *decaying motion*, the longer *past*, the more *impossible* would it be to *recover* any thing; but, do we not find that many *old men* will better *remember* the *circumstances* of many *things* they did in their *Child-hood* than a *year* or *two* before? Besides, we see what *quickness* and *vivacity* there is in our *intellectual faculties* above *corporeal motion*, with what *facility* the

Hobs *Humane Nature, ch.* 3. *sect.* 1.

mind

mind turns it ſelf from one *object* to another, how *ſuddenly* it *rangeth* the whole *world*, how it *trips* over *mountains*, *croſſeth* the *ocean*, *mounts* to the *skies*, and at laſt *quarries* upon it *ſelf*, and all in the *twinkling* of an *intellectual eye*? As *quick* as the *eye* of the *body* is, the *mind* far exceeds it, and can withdraw the *imagination* from *attending* the *organs* of *ſenſe*, thus do *men* who have their *minds* much *fixed*, *fix* their *eyes* too; and yet afterwards can ſcarce tell *themſelves* what they have *looked* on all that while. Sometimes the *mind* fits and *compares phantaſms* together, and *ſports* it ſelf in *ſorting* them into ſeveral *ranks* and *orders*, and making *matches* between ſuch *things* which are ſure to have no *affinity* with each other, which are thence called *entia rationis*, or the *creatures* of the *mind*. And can all theſe and many other ſuch *operations* which men are *conſcious* to themſelves of, be nothing elſe but the *motion* of ſome *flegmatick matter*, the *reaction* of the *brain*, and the mere *effects* of *Imagination*?

3. *The profund ſpeculations of the mind* argue a *power* far above *imagination* and *corporeal motion*. I wonder how *Epicurus* his *ſoul*, when, if we believe him, it was made up of *Atoms*, could ever imagine an *Infinite Vacuity*? Could mere *Atoms* ever *diſpute* whether they were *Atoms* or no? For I doubt not but *Epicurus* was fain to argue much againſt himſelf, before he could perſuade himſelf to ſo *ſtupendious* a piece of *folly*? Were there nothing in man but mere *corporeal motion*, whence came the *diſpute*, whether the *ſoul* were *corporeal* or no? Can *Atoms* frame *Syllogiſms* in *mood* and *figure*? and mere *matter* argue *pro* and *con*, whether it be *matter* or ſomething elſe? What kind of *aereal particles* were their *ſouls* compounded of, who firſt *fanſied* themſelves to be *immaterial*? What ſtrange *agitations* of *matter* were thoſe which firſt made men think of an *eternal ſtate*? which *thoughts* have ever ſince ſo *ſtuck* upon theſe *little ſpherical bodies*, that they could never yet *disburthen* themſelves of them: Whence come ſuch *amazing fears*, ſuch *dreadfull apprehenſions*, ſuch *ſinking thoughts* of their *future condition* in *minds* that would fain *eaſe* themſelves by *believing*, that *death* would put a *period* both to *ſoul* and *body*? Whence on the other ſide come ſuch *encouraging hopes*, ſuch *confident expectations*, ſuch *comfortable prepoſſeſſions* of their *future ſtate*, in the *ſouls* of *good men*, when their

bodies

bodies are neareſt to the *grave*? *Seneca*, who was ſomewhat *dubious* ſometimes as to the *future condition* of the *ſoul*, yet could tell his dear *Lucilius* with what *pleaſure* he could *think* of it; and could elſewhere ſay of the *ſoul*, *Et hoc habet argumentum divinitatis ſuæ quod illum divina delectant, nec ut alienis intereſt ſed ut ſuis: the ſoul had that mark of Divinity in it, that it was moſt pleaſed with Divine ſpeculations, and converſed with them as with matters which nearly concerned it.* And when it hath once *viewed* the *dimenſions* of the *Heavens*, *contemnit domicilii priſtini angustias*, it was aſhamed of the *cottage* it dwelt in; nay, were it not for theſe *ſpeculations*, *non fuerat operæ pretium naſci*, it had not been worth while for the ſoul to have been in the body; and as he goes on, *detrahe hoc ineſtimable bonum, non eſt vita tanti ut ſudem, ut æſtuem.* Could there be now ſo great an *Epicuriſm* in *contemplation*, were the *ſoul* of *man* of *Epicurus* his *mould*, a mere *complexion* of *Atoms*? would *dull* and *heavy matter* ever have *delighted* to have *ſearched* ſo much into the *cauſes* of *things*, to have gone over the *world* in its *ſpeculations*, and found more *ſweetneſs* in *knowledge*, than the little *Epicure*, the *Bee*, *taſts* in his choiceſt *flowers*? *Epicurus* his own *Philoſophy* is a *demonſtration* againſt *himſelf*; if his *ſoul* had not been of a *purer nature* than he fanſied, he would never have made his *ſtudy* of *Philoſophy* a part of his *Epicuriſm*? had his *ſoul* been ſuch *Atoms* as he *fanſied*, when his *brain* had been well *heated* at his *ſtudy*, thoſe more *vivid* and *ſpirituous particles*, like the ſpirits of wine, had been in *danger* of *evaporation*, and leaving the more *lumpiſh matter* to *complete* his *work*. Of all perſons, I moſt admire that *Philoſophers*, who make ſo much *uſe* of their *underſtandings*, ſhould ſo *ungratefully requite* them, and ſerve them like *old horſes*, when they have made them doe all the *ſervice* they could, *turn* them into the *high-ways*, and let them *die* in a *ditch*. But yet all *Philoſophers* have not been ſo *unthankfull*, ſome have underſtood the *worth* of their *ſoul*, and aſſerted it, if they have not uſed too *high*, i. e. *Platonical expreſſions* of it, making it a *particle*, not of *matter*, but of the *Divine nature* it ſelf, a little *Deity* in a *Cottage*, that ſtays here a-while, and returns to that upper *Region* from whence it came As *Manilius* ſpeaks,

Præf ad 2 naſt. Natur.

Manil l. 4.

An dubium eſt habitare Deum ſub pectore noſtro,
In cœlumque redire animas, cœloque venire?

And while the *ſoul* is here in its *cage*, it is continually *fluttering up and down*, and delighteth to look *out* now at this *part*, and then at *another*, to take a *view* by *degrees* of the *whole Univerſe*, as the ſame *Poet* goes on,

Quid mirum noſcere mundum
Si poſſunt homines, quibus eſt & mundus in ipſis:
Exemplumque Dei quiſque eſt in imagine parva?

The *ſoul* hath nothing more *delightfull* to it than *knowledge*, and *no knowledge* ſo *pleaſing* and *ſatisfactory* as of him whoſe *image* and *ſuperſcription* it bears, who makes himſelf moſt *known* to ſuch as *enquire* after him;

Seque ipſum inculcat & offert
Ut bene cognoſci poſſit.

I conclude this with that of *Seneca*, in that *excellent* Preface to his natural queſtions, O *quam contempta res eſt homo niſi ſupra humana ſe erexerit! what a pitifull thing is man, were it not that his ſoul was apt to ſoar above theſe earthly things?* And by this aptneſs to *ſoar* ſo high above theſe *terrene objects*, and to converſe with ſo much freedom with *ſpiritual Beings*, as well as *abſtracted notions*, we may certainly inferr that our *rational ſouls* are of a far more noble and refined nature, than that more *feculent principle* of *imagination* which always converſes in *fæce Romuli*, and can go no further than our *ſenſes* carry it. And thus I have made good the firſt proof, that there is ſomething above *matter* and *motion* in the *world*, which is from that *immaterial Being* which is in man.

Sect. 19. 2. The next *evidence* which we have of a *Being* above *matter* and *motion*, is, from *the extraordinary effects which have been in nature.* I ſpeak not now merely of ſuch *things* which by their *natures* and *effects* are manifeſted to proceed from ſome *Beings* which bear *ill-will* to *mankind*, *multitudes* of which are related by men *philoſophical* and *inquiſitive*, with ſuch

enume-

enumerations of *circumstances*, and particular *evidences*, that they are not mere *impostures*, that one may on the same *grounds* question any *matter* of *fact* which himself did not see, as such *relations* which are delivered by *persons* without *interest* or *design*, and such as were able to *judge* of the *truth* of *circumstances*; such are both *ancient* and *modern Philosophers*, *Physicians*, *States men*, and others. Neither shall I insist on such *prodigies*, which oft-times presage *revolutions* in *States*, if we believe *Machiavel* himself, who in a whole chapter designedly proves it; and professeth himself utterly to seek for the *causes* of them, unless they may be attributed to some *spirits* and *intelligences* in the air which give the world notice of such things to come. But those *things* which I suppose have the most clear and undoubted evidence of *true* and *undoubted miracles* (the *matters* of *fact* being affirmed by *eye-witnesses*, who *sealed* the *truth* of them with their *lives*) are those recorded in the holy Scriptures; which there are only two *ways* to evade, either by *questioning* the *truth* of the *things*, which I suppose in the precedent book we have proved with as much *rational evidence* as any thing of that nature is capable of, or else that the *things* therein *recorded* might be *salved* without a *Deity*. For which only two ways have been *excogitated* by *Atheistical spirits*, either *attributing* them to the *power* and *influence* of the *Stars*, the *foundations* of which fond and absurd opinion have been taken away by those many *Writers*, who have *rationally* confuted the whole Art of *Judicial Astrology*, or else that they are done by the mere *power* of *imagination*, which is the way of *Avicenna* and some other *Arabick* Writers, which is so wild an effect of the *power* of *imagination*, that nothing doth so much demonstrate the *irregular motions* of it, as such an opinion doth; and is sufficiently *derided* and *refuted* by *Pomponatius* himself. Now then, it being an acknowledged *principle* in *nature*, *that every thing continues in the course it is in, till something more powerfull put it out*, if then such *things* have been in the world, which have been real *alterations* of the *course* of *nature*, as the *Suns standing still in the time of* Joshua, then there must be something above *matter* and *motion*, and consequently that there is a God.

Disput. 1. c. 56.

V. D. H More's Mystery of Godliness, *l.* 7. *c.* 14, 15, 16, 17.

CHAP. II.

Of the Origin of the Univerſe.

The neceſſity of the belief of the Creation of the world in order to the truth of Religion. Of the ſeveral Hypotheſes of the Philoſophers who contradict Moſes: *with a particular examination of them. The ancient tradition of the world conſonant to* Moſes; *proved from the Ionick Philoſophy of* Thales, *and the Italick of* Pythagoras. *The Pythagorick Cabbala rather Ægyptian than Moſaick. Of the fluid matter, which was the material principle of the Univerſe. Of the Hypotheſis of the eternity of the world aſſerted by* Ocellus Lucanus *and* Ariſtotle. *The weakneſs of the foundations on which that opinion is built. Of the manner of forming principles of Philoſophy. The poſſibility of creation proved. No arguing from the preſent ſtate of the world againſt its beginning, ſhewed from* Maimonides. *The Platoniſts arguments from the goodneſs of God for the eternity of the world, anſwered. Of the Stoical Hypotheſis of the eternity of matter; whether reconcilable with the Text of* Moſes. *Of the Opinions of* Plato *and* Pythagoras *concerning the præ-exiſtence of matter to the formation of the world. The contradiction of the eternity of matter to the nature and attributes of God. Of the Atomical Hypotheſis of the Origin of the Univerſe. The world could not be produced by a caſual concourſe of Atoms proved from the nature and motion of* Epicurus *his Atoms, and the Phænomena of the Univerſe, eſpecially the production and nature of Animals. Of the* Carteſian *Hypotheſis, that it cannot ſalve the Origin of the Univerſe without a Deity giving motion to matter.*

Sect. 1. THE *Foundations* of *Religion* being thus eſtabliſhed in the *Being* of *God*, and the *Immortality* of the *Soul*, we now come to erect our *ſuperſtructure* upon them, by aſſerting the undoubted *truth* and *certainty* of that *account* of the *world* which is given us in the *writings* of *Moſes*. Which beginning with the *world* it ſelf, leads us to a particular conſideration of

of the *Origin* of the *Universe*, the right understanding of which hath very great influence upon our *belief* of all that follows in the *Word* of *God*. For although we should assert with *Epicurus* the *Being* of a *Deity*, if yet with him we add that the *world* was made by a *casual concourse* of *Atoms*, all that part of *Religion* which lies in obedience to the *Will* of *God* is unavoidably destroyed. All that is left, is only a kind of *Veneration* of a *Being* more *excellent* than our own, which reacheth not to the *government* of *men's lives*, and so will have no force at all upon the generality of the world, who are only *allured* by *hopes* or *awed* by *fears*, to that which of their *choice* they would be glad to be freed from. Besides, What *expressions* of *gratitude* can be left to *God* for his *goodness*, if he interpose not in the *affairs* of the *world*? What *dependence* can there be on divine *goodness*, if it benot at all manifested in the world? What apprehensions can we have of *God's infinite wisdom* and *power*, if neither of them are discernible in the *Being* of the *world*? And as the opinion of *Epicurus* destroys *Religion*, so doth that of *Aristotle* which attributes *eternity* to the *Universe*, and a necessary *emanation* of it from the first cause, as *light* comes from the *Sun*; for if so, as *Maimonides* well observes, *the whole religion of* Moses *is overthrown, all his miracles are but impostures, all the hopes which are grounded on the Promises of God, are vain and fruitless.* For if the *world* did of *necessity* exist, then *God* is no *free agent*; and if so, then all *instituted Religion* is to no purpose; nor can there be any *expectation* of *reward*, or *fear* of *punishment* from him who hath nothing else to doe in the *world*; but to set the great *wheel* of the *Heavens* going. So much is it our *concernment* to enquire into the true *original* of the *world*; and on what *evidence* of *reason* those *opinions* are built, which are so contrary to that *account* given of it in the very *entrance* of the *Books* of *Moses*. Wherein we read the true *origin* of the *world* to have been by a *production* of it by the *omnipotent Will* and *Word* of *God*. This being then the plain *assertion* of *Moses*, we come to compare it, in point of *reason*, with all those several *hypotheses* which are *repugnant* to it, which have been embraced in several *ages* by the *Philosophers* of greatest *esteem* in the world. Which may be reduced to these four: 1. *Such as suppose the world to have existed as it is from all eternity.*

More Nevoch. p. 2. c. 25.

2. *Such as attribute the formation of the world as it is to God: but withall assert the præ-existence and eternity of matter.* 3. *Such as deny any eternity to the world, but assert the origin of it to have been by a casual concourse of atoms.* 4. *Such as endeavour to explain the origin of the Universe and all appearances of nature, merely by the Mechanical Laws of the motions of matter.*

Sect. 2. I begin with those who asserted the *eternity of the world* as it *is*, among whom *Aristotle* hath born the greatest name; who seems to have *arrogated* this opinion to himself; for when he enquires into the *judgment* of the *Philosophers*, who had writ before him, he says of them, γιγνώσκον μὲν ὃν ἅπαντες ὅτι εἶναι φασιν, *all the Philosophers asserted that the world was made*, tho' some one way, some another. And were this true which *Aristotle* saith, it would be the strongest *prejudice* against his opinion; for if the *world* had been *eternal*, how should it come to pass, that the eldest *Philosophers* should so readily and unanimously *embrace* that *opinion* which asserted the *production* of the *world*? Was it not a strong *presumption* of the *novity* of the *Universe*, that all *Nations* to whom the *Philosophers* resorted had *memorials* left among them of the first *origin* of *things*? And from hence it is observable, that when the *humour* of *philosophizing* began to take the *Greeks* (about the XL *Olympiad*, when we may suppose *Thales* to *flourish*) the *beginning* of the *world* was no *matter* of *dispute*, but, taking that for granted, the *enquiry* was, out of what *material Principle* the *Universe* was formed; of which *Thales* thus delivers his opinion in *Tully*; *aquam dixit esse initium rerum, Deum autem eam mentem quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret*; wherein he plainly distinguisheth the *efficient* from the *material cause* of the world. The prime *efficient* was *God*, the *material principle*, *water*. It is a *matter* of some *enquiry*, whether the *first principles* of *Philosophy* among the *Greeks* were not rather some *traditional* things conveyed to them from *others*, than any certain *Theories* which they had formed from their own *experiments* and *observations*. The former is to me far the more *probable* on many *accounts*, but chiefly on this, that the *first principles* of the two Founders of the chief *sects* of *Philosophers*, *viz.* the *Ionick* and *Italick* (for all the other were but the various *issues* of these two) did come so near to that which we have

Aristot. de cælo, l. 1. c. 10.

De Nat. Deor. l. 1. cap. 25.

have the greateſt *reaſon* to believe to have been the moſt certain *account* of the *origin* of the *world*. For this opinon of *Thales* ſeems to have been part of that *univerſal tradition* which was continued in the world concerning the *firſt principles* of things: for I do not ſee any reaſon to averr with ſo much confidence, as ſome doe, that thoſe *Philoſophers* who ſpake any thing conſonantly to *Moſes*, muſt preſently *converſe* with the *Jews*, tranſcribe their *opinions* out of the *Scriptures*, or have them conveyed to them in ſome ſecret *Cabbala* of the *Creation*, as it is affirmed of *Pythagoras* and *Plato*, and may with no leſs reaſon of *Thales*. But this I ſuppoſe may be made evident to any conſiderative *perſon*, that thoſe *Philoſophers* of *Greece*, who converſed moſt abroad in the *world*, did *ſpeak* far more agreeably to the true *account* of *things*, than ſuch who only endeavoured by their own *wits* to *improve* or *correct* thoſe *principles* which were delivered by the other *Philoſophers*. Which I impute not ſo much to their *converſe* with the *Moſaick writings*, as to that *univerſal tradition* of the firſt *ages* of the *world*, which was preſerved far better among the *Phœnicians*, *Ægyptians*, *Chaldeans*, and others, than among the *Greeks*. For which we have this evident *reaſon*, that *Greece* was far more *barbarous* and *rude* in its elder *times*, than thoſe other *Nations* were, which had means of preſerving ſome *monuments* and general *reports* of the firſt *ages* of the *world*, when the *Græcians* wanted them. And therefore we find that *Greece* from its *beginning* *ſhined* with a borrowed *light*; and ſaw not by an *extramiſſion* of *rays* of *knowledge* from it ſelf, but by an *intromiſſion* of thoſe *repreſentations* of *things* which were received from other *Nations*. Thoſe who formed *Greece* firſt into civil *ſocieties*, and *licked* it into the *ſhape* of well ordered *Common-wealths*, were ſuch who had been *traders* for *knowledge* into foreign parts. To which purpoſe *Diodorus Siculus* informs us *that* Lycurgus *and* Solon, *as well as the Poets*, Orpheus, Muſæus, Melampus *and* Homer, *and the Philoſophers*, *afterwards* Pythagoras, Plato, *and others*, *had gained moſt of their knowledge and wiſdom out of* Ægypt; may, he ſaith in general, ὅσοι ἦσαν παρ' ἕλλησι δεδοξασμένοι ἐπὶ συνέσει καὶ παιδείᾳ, παρέβαλον εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἐν τοῖς ἀρχαίοις χρόνοις, ἵνα ἐκεῖ ἐνταῦθα νομίμων καὶ αἰδρίας μεθέλωσιν. *All thoſe who were renowned among the Greeks for wiſdom and learning, did in ancient time*

Biblioth. l. 1 *V. Euſeb. Præp. Evangel. l.* 10.

time resort to Ægypt, *to be acquainted with their Laws and knowledge.* On this account therefore we are not to seek for the ancient and genuine *tradition* of the *world* from the *native* and *home-bred Greeks*, such as *Aristotle* and *Epicurus*, but from those who took the *pains* themselves to *search* into those *records* which were preserved among the *elder* and more *knowing Nations:* And although the *Nations* they resorted to, sought to *advance* their own *reputation* in the *histories* of their *ancient times*, of which we have already given a large account, yet they were more *faithfull* in the *account* which they gave of the *origin* of the *whole Universe.* For it appears from *Diogenes Laertius*, that the *Ægyptians* did constantly believe, *that the world had a beginning, and was corruptible; that it was a sphærical, and the stars were of the nature of fire; that the soul was if an immortal nature, and did pass up and down the world.* Which *Laertius* cites from *Hecatæus* and *Aristagoras.* So that we need not make *Pythagoras* acquainted with such a *Cabbala* of the *Creation*, which in all probability neither the *Jews* nor he ever dreamt of; we find a fair *account* may be given of most of the *opinions* of *Pythagoras*, and whence he derived them, without forcing the words of *Moses* into such a sence, which the *plainness* and *perspicuity* of the *writings* of *Moses*, argue them not capable to admit of. But I will not deny from those concurrent *testimonies* of *Hermippus* and *Aristobulus*, besides *Origen*, *Porphyrie*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and others, that *Pythagoras* might have had *opportunity* of conversing with the *Jews*, (which it is most probable was in *Chaldæa*, after the *Captivity*, at which time *Pythagoras* was there among them) but that *Pythagoras* should converse with the successors of *Elisha* on mount *Carmel*, as *Vossius* thinks; or that *Moschus* the *Sidonian Philosopher*, in *Iamblichus*, should be *Moses*, as others fansie; or that *præexistence* of *souls* should be part of the *Mosaick Cabbala*; or that the *Pythagorick* numbers, as they are explained by *Nicomachus Gerasenus* in *Photius*, should be *adæquate* to the *days* of the *Creation Cabbalistically* understood, are *fancies* too extravagant and *Pythagorean*, to be easily embraced. If *Pythagoras* was *circumcised*, it was more for *love* of the *Ægyptians* than the *Jews*, among whom he spent his twenty two years; if *præ existence* of *souls* be a rational *hypothesis*, we may thank

Diog. Laert. proæm. p. 7.

V. Selden. de jure nat & gen. apud Ebræos, l. 1. c. 2.

Voss. de Sectis Philosoph. c. 6. sect. 5.

thank the *Ægyptians* for it, and not *Moses*; if *numbers* be so *expressive* of the work of *Creation*, we are beholding to the *Arithmetical Hieroglyphicks* of *Ægypt* for them. But although *Pythagoras* might not be *acquainted* with such a *philosophick Cabbala* of the *Creation*, which none of the *Jews*, as far as we can find, understood, till *one* more versed in *Plato* and *Pythagoras* than in the *learning* of his own *Nation*, viz. *Philo* of *Alexandria*, began first to exercise his *wit* on the Text of *Moses*, with *Platonick notions*; yet I shall easily grant that *Pythagoras*, by *means* of his great *industry* and *converse* with the learned *Nations*, might attain to far greater knowledge of many mysterious things in *natural Philosophy*, and as to the *origin* of the *Universe*, than any of the *home-bred Philosophers* of *Greece*, or it may be, than any *one* of the *Nations* he resorted to, because he had the advantage of comparing the several *accounts* of them together, and *extracting* out that which he *judged* the *best* of them. And hence *Plutarch* tells us, that the first *principles* of the *world*, according to *Pythagoras*, were these two, the one was τὸ ποιητικὸν αἴτιον καὶ εἰδικὸν (ὅπερ ἐστὶ νοῦς ὁ θεὸς) *an active and forming principle*, and that was *God*, whom he called *Mind*, (as *Anaxagoras* likewise did) the other was τὸ παθητικόν τε καὶ ὑλικὸν (ὅπερ ἐστὶν ὁ ὁρατὸς κόσμος) *passive and material*, which is, *the visible world*.

V. Mathem Hieroglyph. Kircheri. Tom. 3. Oedip. Ægypt.

Plutarch. de Plat philos. l. 1. cap. 3.

And thus we see these two renowned *Founders* of the *Ionick* and *Italick societies of Philosophers*, both giving their concurrent *Testimony* with *Moses* as to the true *origin* of the *world*, and not at all *differing* from each other; for thus *Thales* speaks in *Diogenes Laertius*, πρεσβύτατον πάντων ὄντων, θεὸς· ἀγένητον γάρ, κάλλιστον κόσμος, ποίημα γὰρ θεοῦ, *God is the eldest Being, because unbegotten; the world the most beautifull, because it is God's workmanship.* To which those *expressions* of *Plato*, in his *Timæus*, come very near (whose *Philosophy* was for substance the same with the *Pythagorean*) when he had before ascribed the *production* of the *world* to the *goodness* of *God*, which *goodness* of his did incline him to make all other *things* like himself. Θείως ὄντ' ἐν ὦ ὄντ' ὄξι πᾶ ἀείσῳ δρᾶν ἄλλο πλὴν τὸ κάλλιστον. *For the most excellent being cannot but produce the most excellent effects.* And as to the *material principle* out of which the *world* was made, there appears no great *difference* between the ὕδωρ of *Thales*, and the ὕλη of *Plato*

Sect. 3.

V. Thalet.

Plato in Timæo, p. 1047. ed. Ficini.

and

and *Pythagoras*; for *Plato*, when he tells us what a *kind* of *thing* the *material principle* was, he describes it thus, οὐκ ὑ-
Chalcid. Timæus, p. 25. ed. Meurs. σχίαν ἀγὸν ἀλλὰ κινήμονον πλημμελῶς καὶ ἀτάκτως, which as *Chalcidius* renders it, is *motu importuno fluctuans neque unquam quiescens*, it was a *visible corporeal thing* (πᾶν ὅσον ἦν ὁρατὸν) *which was never at rest, but in continual disorderly motion and agitation*: which is a full explication, I suppose, of what *Thales* meant by his *water*, which is the same with that ὑλὴ or *mixture* of *mud* and *water* together, which others speak
Annot. in l. 1. de Ver. Christ. Relig. of as the *principle* of the *Universe*; as *Orpheus*, in *Athenagoras*, and the *Scholiast* on *Apollonius* cited by *Grotius* and others. Which we have the more *reason* to believe, because the *successors* of *Thales*, *Anaximander* and *Anaxagoras*, express themselves to that purpose. *Anaximander* called the *Sea*, τὸ καταλειφθὲν ὑγρασίας λείψανον, *the remainder of the primitive moisture*: and *Anaxagoras* says, before the Νοῦς, or *God*, set things in their order, πάντα χρήματα ἦν ὁμοῦ πεφυρμένα, *all things were at first confused together*: which must needs make that which *Chalcidius* tells us *Numenius* attributes to *Pythagoras*,
Chalcid. in Tim. p. 394. which his Translator calls *Sylvam fluidam*, or *fluid Matter*. Which is the same likewise with the *Phœnicians* Μῶτ, which
Euseb. Præp. Evang. l. 1. c. 10. as appears by *Eusebius*, some call ἰλὺν, others ὑλαπώδους μίξεως σῆψιν, some, *mud* or *slime*, others, the *putrefaction of watery mixtures*, which they say was, σπορὰ κλίσιως καὶ φύσεως ὅλων, *the seed-plot of the Creation and the generation of things*. Thus we see how *Thales* with the *Phœnicians* from whom he was derived, as *Laertius* tells us and *Pythagoras*, with the *Ægyptians* and others, concurr with *Moses*, not only in the *production* of the *world*, but in the *manner* of it, wherein is expressed a *fluid matter* which was the *material principle* out of which
Gen. 1. 2. the *world* was *formed*, when we are told that *the earth was without form and void, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, i. e.* that all at first was but *fluid matter*; for *P. Fagius*, from *R. Kimchi*, renders תֹּהוּ by ὕλη, which *fluid matter* was *agitated* and *moved* by the *Divine Spirit*, or the *vis plastica mundi*, so *Chrysostom* calls it ἐνέργεια ζωϊκὴ· and so *Drusius* and *P. Fagius* explain רָחַף by *motion* or *agitation*. And herein we have likewise the consent of those forenamed *excellent Philosophers*, who attribute the *origin* of particular *things* in the *world* to this *agitation* or *motion* of the

the *fluid matter*. For *Chalcidius* speaking not only of *Thales*, *Pythagoras*, *Plato*, but of *Anaximenes*, *Heraclitus*, and others, says thus of them, *omnes igitur hi—in motu positam rerum originem censuerunt: they all agreed in this, that the Origin of things was to be ascribed to the motion of the parts of matter.* So the *Phœnicians* called this *motion* of the *particles* of *matter* ἀέρα ζοφώδη καὶ πνευματώδη *a dark and blustering wind.* And how suitable this *explication* of the *Origin* of *things* from the *motion* of *fluid matter* is to the *history* of *nature*, appears by those many *experiments* by which *mixt bodies* are shewed to spring from no other *material principle* than the *particles* of *fluid matter*. Of which you may read a discourse of that *ingenious* and *learned Gentleman* Mr. *Boyle* in his *Sceptical Chymist*. Only thus much may here suffice to have made it *appear*, that all those *Philosophers*, who were *most inquisitive* after the *ancient* and *genuine tradition* of the *world* concerning the *first beginning* of *things*, did not only *concur* with *Moses* in the main thing, that its *beginning* was from *God*, but in the particular *circumstances* of it, as to the *fluid matter* and the *motion* thereof. Concerning which I may yet add, if it be material, the *Testimony* of *Homer* in *Plutarch*.

Chalcid. in Tim. p. 378.

Sceptical Chymist. p. 115. &c.

Ωκεανὸς, ὅσσπερ γένεσις πάντεσσι πέτυκται. *Iliad.* ξ.

And in *Chalcidius*: *Inque eadem sententia Homerus esse invenitur, cum Oceanum & Thetin dicat parentes esse genituræ; cumque jusjurandum Deorum constituat aquam, quam quidem ipse appellat Stygem, antiquitati tribuens reverentiam, & jurejurando nihil constituens reverentius.* To which purpose likewise *Aristotle* speaks in his *Metaphysicks*, that the reason why *Styx* was made the *oath* of the *Gods*, was because *water* was *supposed to be the material principle of things*, which he saith was ἀρχαία τις αὕτη καὶ παλαιὰ περὶ τὴν φύσεως δόξα, *a most ancient tradition concerning the Origin of the Universe*. And tells us before, that some were of opinion, τὰς παμπαλαίους, καὶ πολὺ πρὸ τῆς νῦν γενέσεως καὶ πρώτους θεολογήσαντας, *that the most ancient and remote persons and first writers of Theology held this opinion of water being the first material principle of things.*

Odyss. ι.

Chalcid. p. 178. *V. Meurs. in. Chal. p.* 37.

Metaphys. l. 1. *c.* 3.

Sect. 4. Having thus made it appear what a *conſent* there was between the *ancient tradition* of the *world*, and the *writings* of *Moſes* concerning the *Origin* of the *world*; I now come to conſider upon what *pretence* of *reaſon* this *tradition* came to be *contradicted*, and the *eternity* of the *world* aſſerted. For which we are to conſider, that the *difference* of the former *Philoſophers* of the *Ionick ſect*, after the time of *Thales*, as to the *material principle* of the *world*, one *ſubſtituting air*, another *fire* inſtead of *water*, rendred the *tradition* its ſelf *ſuſpected* among other *Philoſophers*, eſpecially when the *humour* of *innovating* in *Philoſophy* was got among them, and they thought they did nothing unleſs they *contradicted* their *Maſters*; thence came that *multiplicity* of *Sects* preſently among them, and that *Philoſophy* which at firſt went much on the *original tradition* of the *world*, was turned into *diſputes* and *altercations*, which helped as much to the finding out of *Truth*, as the *fighting* of two *Cocks* on a *dung-hill* doth to the *finding* out the *Jewel* that lies there. For which, *ſcraping* and *ſearching* into the *natures* of *things* had been far more *proper*, than *contentions* and *wranglings* with each other; but by means of this *litigious humour*, *Philoſophy* from being a *deſign*, grew to be a mere *Art*, and he was accounted the beſt *Philoſopher*, not that ſearched further into the *bowels* of *nature*, but that *dreſſed* and *tricked* up the *notions* he had in the beſt *poſture* of *defence* againſt all who came to oppoſe him. From hence thoſe *opinions* were moſt *plauſible*, not which were moſt *true*, but which were moſt *defenſible*, and which *Des-Cartes* his *ſecond element*, had all the *Angles* cut off, on which their *adverſaries* might have an *advantage* of *juſtling* upon them, and then their *opinions* were accounted moſt *pure* when they are ſo *ſphærical*, as to paſs up and down without *interruption*. From ſuch a *degeneracy* of *Philoſophy* as this we have now mentioned, aroſe the *opinion* of the *eternity* of the *world*; for the certain *tradition* of the *world* being now *loſt* in a *crowd* of *Philoſophers*, whoſe main *aim* was to ſet *up* for themſelves, and not to *trade* with the *common bank*, ſo that there could be no *certain* and *convictive evidence* given to a *ſhuffling Philoſopher* that *things* were ever otherwiſe than they are; they found it moſt *defenſible* to *aſſert* that the *world* never had a *beginning*, nor would have an *end*, but always *did*, and would *continue* in the *State* they

they were in. This opinion, though *Aristotle* seems to make all before him to be of another mind, yet was *hatched*, as far as we can find, at first, under *Pythagoras* his successors by *Ocellus Lucanus*, as appears by his *book* still extant, περὶ τῆς τοῦ παντὸς φύσεως *of the nature of the Universe*; to whom *Aristotle* hath not been a little beholding, as *Ludov. Nogarola* hath in part manifested in his *notes* on *Ocellus*, although *Aristotle* had not the *ingenuity* of *Pliny*, *agnoscere per quos profecerit*. From *Aristotle* this opinion together with his name, spread it self much farther, and became the *opinion* most in *vogue* among the *Heathen Philosophers*, especially after the rise *of Christianity*; for then not only the *Peripatetick*s, but the modern *Platonists*, *Plotinus*, *Apuleius*, *Taurus*, *Jamblichus*, *Alcinous*, *Proclus* and others, were all engaged in the *defence* of the *eternity* of the *world*, thinking thereby the *better* to overthrow *Christianity*. Hence came the *hot* and eager *contests* between *Proclus*, *Simplicius*, and *Philoponus*, who undertook to answer *Proclus* his eighteen *arguments* for the *eternity* of the *world*, and to charge *Aristotle* with self-contradiction in reference to it. But nothing were they more troubled about, than to reconcile the *Timæus* of *Plato* with the *eternity* of the *world*, which they made to be a mere *Hypothesis*, and a kind of *Diagramme* to salve *providence* withal; although the plain *words* of *Plato* not only there, but elsewhere do express, as far as we can judge by his way of *writing*, his *real judgment* to have been for the *production* of the *world* by *God*. For which purpose we have this observable *Testimony* in his *Sophista*, where he divides all manner of *productions* of things into *divine* and *humane*, and opposes the *opinion* that conceived all things to be produced by an *eternal power*, to the *opinion* of the *vulgar*, which saith he, was τὴν φύσιν αὐτὰ γίγνεσθαι ἀπὸ τύχης αὐτομάτης ὑπὸ δ' ἀνοήτου πηδήσεως φύσεως, *that all things were produced by a blind force of nature without any reason or counsel*, to which he opposeth the other opinion, that they are made μετὰ λόγου τινὸς ὑπὸ θείας ἀπὸ θεοῦ γιγνομένης, *by a divine power with infinite reason and wisdom*, and when *Theætetus* expresseth himself in an *Academical way* as to either of these *opinions*, the *hospes Eleatensis*, who there acts the part of the *Philosopher*, tells him, if he thought he were *inclinable* to the other *opinion*, νῦν ἂν τῷ λόγῳ μὴ πιθοῦ ἀναγκαίας ἐπιχειρεῖν πειθεῖν (*Platon. Sophist. p.* 185. *ed. Fic.*

ποιεῖν ὁμολογεῖν. *He would undertake to make him confess the contrary by the evidence of reason which he would bring.* And we shall see what great *reason* there is for this opinion, when we consider what *weak* and *infirm foundations* the *contrary* is built upon. For all the arguments which either *Ocellus*, or *Aristotle*, or the modern *Platonists* make use of, are built on these following *suppositions* which are all false. 1. *That it is unconceivable that things should ever have been in any other state than they are.* 2. *That there is no other way of production but by Generation.* 3. *That God is no free agent, but produceth the world by necessity of nature.*

Sect. 5. 1. *That it is unconceivable that things should ever have been any otherwise than they are.* The reason of which *supposition* was this, that the general *conclusions* of *reason*, which they proceed upon in *Philosophy*, were taken up from the *observation* of *things* as they are at present in the world. Which is evident from the *ground* of *Aristotle*'s condemning the *opinion* of *Empedocles*, who asserted the *production* of the *world*, and yet the *incorruptibility* of it. τὸ μὲν ἓν γενέσθαι μὲν, ἀΐδιον δ' ὅμως εἶναι φάναι τῶν ἀδυνάτων, which he accounts *impossible* and gives this as his reason, μόνα γὰρ τῶν τοιούτων εὐλόγως, ἃ ἐπὶ πολλῶν ἢ πάντων ὑπάρχοντα. *For*, saith he, *nothing else can be rationally asserted, but what we find to be in all things or at least in most*; now because there could *nothing* be found in the world which was *produced* (i. e. by *generation*) and yet was *incorruptible*, therefore he concludes it *impossible* it should be so with the *Universe*. By which we evidently see what the *grand principles* of *reason* among the *Philosophers* were: *viz.* such *observations* as they had made from the *present course* of *nature* in the *order* of the *Universe*. From hence arose that strong *presumption* among them, which hath been so taken for granted, that it hath been looked on as a *common notion of humane nature*, viz. *ex nihilo nihil fit*, which was the main argument used by them to prove the *eternity* of the *world*: and by others to prove the *præ-existence of matter*. So *Ocellus* argues against both the *dissolution* and *production* of the *world* from *this principle*; if the *world* be *dissolved*, saith he, it must either be ἤτοι εἰς τὸ ὄν, ἢ εἰς τὸ μὴ ὄν, *either into that which is, or into that which is not*; it cannot be *dissolved into that which is, because then the Universe cannot be destroyed*; *for that which is,*

Arist. de cælo. l. 1. *cap.* 10.

V. Laer. in vit. Democriti.

15

is either the Universe, or a part of it: neither can it be dissolved into that which is not, ἀμήχανον γὰρ τὸ ὂν ἀποτελεσθῆναι ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος, ἢ εἰς τὸ μὴ ὂν ἀναλυθῆναι. *For it is impossible that a thing should be made out of that which is not, or be dissolved into nothing.* And *Aristotle* somewhere tells us, that it is a principle which all the writers of *natural Philosophy* are *agreed* in, (περὶ γὰρ πάντες ὁμογνωμονοῦσι τῆς δόξης ἅπαντες οἱ περὶ τὴν φύσιν) which is ἐκ μὴ ὄντος γίνεσθαι ἀδύνατον, *that it is impossible for any thing to come out of nothing.* But now when we observe upon what *grounds* this *principle* was took up by these *Philosophers*, we have no *reason* to admit of it as an Universal *standard* of *nature.* For we find by these *Naturalists*, who thus asserted this *principle*, that when they go about to prove it, it is only from the *course* of *Generations* in the *world*, or from the *works* of *Art*, both which suppose *matter præ-existent*, and from these short *collections* they form this *universal Maxim.* And from hence when they discoursed of the *manner* whereby *God* did produce the world, their imaginations ran presently upon that which the *Epicurean* in *Tully* enquires after, *quæ molitio? quæ ferramenta? qui vectes? quæ machinæ? qui ministri tanti operis fuerunt?* they apprehend *God* only as an *Artificer* that contrives the World first into a *platform*, and then useth instruments to erect it, and *consequently* still suppose the *matter* ready for him to work upon. So true is that of *Balbus* in *Tully* when he comes to discourse of the *nature* of *God*; *in quo nihil est difficilius quam à consuetudine oculorum aciem mentis abducere*; *nothing is more difficult than to abstract our minds from the observations of this visible world when we seek to apprehend the Nature of the Deity.* Thus we see upon what general grounds the *Philosophers* proceeded, and from what they took them, and how *insufficient* any *collections* from the present order of the *Universe* are to determine any thing concerning its *production* by. For supposing a *production* of the *world*, several *things* must of necessity be supposed in it, *different* from what the present *order* of the *world* is; and it is an *unreasonable thing* to *argue* from a *thing* when it is in its greatest *perfection*, to what must always have *been* in the same thing; for by this *means* we must *condemn* many things for *falsities* which are apparently *true*, and *believe* many others to be *true* which are apparently *false.* For which *Maimonides* useth an excellent similitude. *Suppose*, saith he, *one of Exquisite Natural*

Ocellus Lucanus p. 16. ed. Commel.

Physic. l. 4.

De Nat. l. 1

De Nat. Deor. l. 2.

More Nevoch. P. 2. c. 17.

tural parts, whose Mother dies assoon he is born, and his Father brings him up in an Island, where he may have no society with mankind till he be grown up to years of understanding, and that he never saw any female of either man or beast: Suppose now this person to enquire of the first man he speaks with, how men are born, and how they come into the world. The other tells him, that every man is bred in the womb of one of the same kind with our selves, thus and thus formed; and that while we are in the womb we have a very little body, and there move and are nourished, and we grow up by little and little till we come to such a bigness, and then we come forth into the world, and yet grow still till we come to such a proportion as we are of. Here presently this young man stops him and enquires, when we were thus little in the womb and did live, move and grow, did we not eat and drink, and breath at our mouth and nostrils as we do now? did we not ease Nature as we do now? If it be answered him, no; then he presently is ready to deny it, and offers to bring demonstrations that it was utterly impossible that it should be so: For, saith he, if either of us cease breathing, but for an hour, our motion and life is gone; how is it then possible for one of us though never so little, to live and move in the womb for so many months, when it is so close, and shut up, and in the middle of the body? If one of us, saith he, should swallow a little bird, it would presently die as soon as it came into the stomach, how much more if it were in the belly? If we should be but for fews days without eating and drinking, we could not live? how can a Child then continue so many months without it? Again, if one doth eat and not void the excrement of what he eats, he will be killed with it in few days; how can it possibly be otherwise with a Child? If it be replyed that there is a passage open in the belly at which the Child receives his nourishment, he will presently say that it is as impossible as the other; for if our bellies were so open, we should be quickly destroyed. And again, if the child hath all its limbs perfect and sound, how comes it not to open its eyes, use the feet, mouth and hands, as we do? And so concludes it impossible that man should ever be born after this manner. Much after this way, saith that excellent Author, do *Aristotle* and *others* argue against the production of the *world*; for if the *world* were produced, say they, it must have been thus,

thus, and *thus*; and it is *impossible* that it should have been so: why? because we see things are otherwise now in the *world*. Which how *infirm* a way of *arguing*, it appears from the consideration of the former *similitude*, in which the *Arguments* are as *strong* to prove the *impossibility* of that which we know to be *true*, as in the *case* about which we dispute.

Sect. 6. 2.

And this now leads us to the second *false Hypothesis* which the *opinion* of the *world's eternity* was founded on, which is, *that there is no other way of production but by Generation.* Most of the *arguments* which are used by *Ocellus* and *Aristotle* against the *production* of the *world*, run upon this *supposition*, that it must be *generated* as we see things are in the world. So *Ocellus* argues, πᾶν τε τὸ γένεσιν ἀρχὴν εἰληφὸς, καὶ διαλύσιος ἀρξάμενον κοινωνῆσαι, δύο διαφόρας μεταβολὰς· μίαν μὲν τὴν ἀπὸ μείζονος ἐπὶ τὸ μεῖζον, καὶ τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ χείρονος ἐπὶ τὸ κρεῖττον· ἡ μὲν οὖν ἀπὸ τοῦ μείζονος ἐπὶ τὸ μεῖζον, καὶ τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ κρείττονος ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον· τὸ δὲ συμπέρασμα τῆς μεταβολῆς ταύτης ὀνομάζεται φθορὰ καὶ διάλυσις. *Every thing that comes into being and is subject to dissolution, hath two observable mutations in it; the one is, whereby it grows from less to greater, and from worse to better, and this is called Generation, and the height of this mutation, perfection; the other begins from better to worse, and from bigger to less, and the conclusion of this is corruption, and dissolution. But now,* saith he, *if the world had a beginning, there would be such a mutation in it, and it would have grown by degrees greater till it had come to its perfection, and from thence it would sensibly decay till it came to dissolution; but no body hath ever observed such a mutation in the world, neither is there any appearance of it;* ἀλλ' ἀεὶ καθ' αὐτὸ καὶ ὡσαύτως διατελεῖ καὶ ἴσον καὶ ὅμοιον αὐτὸ ἑαυτῷ· *but the world is semper idem, it varies not nor alters any thing from it self. For which,* he particularly instanceth in *the courses, Symmetries, figures, positions, intervals, proportions* of *motion* which are in the world, which things all are *capable* of such a *mutation*, yet we see no such thing in the *Universe*, from whence he inferrs that the *universe* was always and will be as it is. Upon the same *principle* doth *Aristotle* dispute for the *eternity* of the *world* from the *Nature* of his *materia prima*, because if the *first matter* were *generated* it must be *generated* of other *matter*, and so *in infinitum*; and so he *argues* from the *Nature* of the *Heavens* that they are

De Natur. universf. p. 8.

not

not capable of *generation* and *corruption* as other *bodies* are. All which *Arguments* signifie no more than this, that the *World* was not *generated* as *Plants* or *Animals* are; and whoever right in his *wits* asserted that it was? But do any of these *Arguments* prove it impossible that *God* having *infinite power* should produce the *Universe* after another *way*, than any of those things are produced in, which we observe in the World? For we assert an *infinite* and *eternal Being* which was the *efficient cause* of the *world*, who by his *omnipotent power* produced it out of *nothing*, and continues it in its Being; which is well expressed by the Author of the *refutation* of *Aristotle* in *Justin Martyr's* works. *We assert*, saith he, *one God who is eternal himself, that hath nothing else coequal with himself, neither by way of subjection or opposition, whose power is so great that nothing can hinder it, by which power he produced the world,* ἀρχὴν ἔχοντος τοῦ εἶναι, καὶ τοῦ πῶς διαμένειν, τῷ ἐκείνου θελήσει; *which hath no other cause, either of its beginning, or of its being, or continuance, but only his Will.* Who fully answers in a *Philosophical manner*, the particular *Allegations* out of *Aristotle*, concerning the *eternity of the World*: his design being, as he saith, to shew μὴ κατὰ τὴν ἀποδεικτικὴν ἐπιστήμην, καθ' ἣν ἐπαγγέλλον Ἕλληνες περὶ Θεοῦ τε καὶ κτίσεων τοὺς λόγους ποιεῖν, τοῦτο πεποιηκότας, ἀλλ' εἰκασμῷ τὸ δοκεῖν διοισαμένους. *That the Greek Philosophers in their discourses concerning God and the Creation, were very far from being as good as their word to observe the laws of demonstration, but instead of them proceeded only upon opinions and conjectures.* And as to this particular of the *possibility* of another way of *production*, besides that of *generation*, he proves it from *Aristotle's* own *opinion*, from the equal *necessity* of the *existence* of *matter*, as of *God*. *For*, saith he, *If God can produce any thing out of matter, which is as necessarily existent as himself, he may produce something out of nothing. For the same repugnancy that there is in that which is absolutely nothing to be produced, the same must there be in that which is necessarily existent.* How then can *God* produce something out of *matter* which *necessarily exists*, and not be *able* to *produce something* out of *nothing*? For if *matter* have its *original* from it self, how can it be *subject* to the *power* of another?

Aristot. dogmat. exerf. p. 111.

Justin Martyr. ep. p. 123.

And

And besides, if we acknowledge *God* to have his *Being* from himself, and on that account attribute *infinite power* to him, by the same reason we must *attribute* it to *matter*. But whatever hath *infinite power* in it self, hath a *power* upon *something* beyond it self; but if *God* and *matter* have it both, they can never have *power* upon each other, or without themselves. Which is a far greater *absurdity* than the mere *asserting* a *power* to produce *something* out of *nothing*, which is implyed in the very *notion* of *infinite power*; for if it be confined to any *matter*, the *power* is not *infinite*, because we cannot but conceive the *bounds* of it; for it extends no farther than *matter* doth. So that a *power* of *creation* is implyed in the very *Notion* of a *Deity*; and therefore it is a mere *Sophism* to argue because the *world* could not be *generated*, therefore it could not be *produced*, unless any other way of *production* but by *generation*, be proved *impossible*.

A third false *Hypothesis* they proceeded on was this, *that the Being of the world was no effect of God's will, but of the necessity of Nature.* For although the *Philosophers* we now speak of, did assert a *Deity*, which in some sence might be called the *cause* of the *world*, yet they withall asserted that the *world* was *co-equal* with God himself, and so though there might be some *priority* in *order* of *causes* between them, yet there was none in *order* of *time*, or *duration*, as we see the *light*, though it *flows* from the *Sun*, yet the *Sun* is never without *light*. This *Aristotle* proves from the necessity of *motion* and *time*: For, saith he, *whatever is moved, must be moved by something else, and consequently there must be a running in Infinitum*; but this runs on a false supposition of the necessity of a continual *physical motion* in *things*, which we deny, since *God* by his *infinite power* may give *motion* to that which had it not before; and so all that can be *proved*, is the necessity of some first *cause*, which we assert, but no *necessity* at all of his continual *acting*, since he may cause *motion* when he please. And for *time* continually existing, it denotes nothing real in it self *existing*, but only our *manner* of *conception*, of the *duration* of things, as it is conceived to belong to *motion*; and so can argue nothing as to the *real existence* of *things* from all eternity. But the latter *Platonists* look upon these as insufficient *ways* of *probation*, and therefore argue from *Sect.* 7. 3.

those *attributes* of *God*, which they conceive most *necessary* and *agreeable* to *God's Nature*; and by which the *world* was *produced* if at all: so that by the same *arguments* whereby we prove that the *world* was *made* by *God*, they prove it to have been from all *eternity*. It was well and truly said of *Plato*, in his *Timæus*, *that the Goodness of God was the cause of the production of the world*; from which speech the more modern *Platonists* gather a *necessity* of the *world's eternity*, for from hence they inferr, that since *God* was always *good*, he must always have an *object* to exercise his *goodness* upon; as the *Sun disperseth his light as soon as he is himself*. True, were *God* of the nature of the *Sun*, it would be so with him; or were the *Sun* of the Nature of *God*, it would not be so with it. But there is this vast *difference* between them, that though *God* be *essentially* and *necessarily good*, yet the *communications* of this *goodness* are the effect of his *will*, and not merely of his *nature*; For, were not the acts of *beneficence* and *goodness* in *God* the *free acts* of his *will*, *man* must be made as *happy* as he was *capable* of being, not only upon his first *existence* in the *world*, but as *long* as it should continue, by mere *necessity* of *nature*, without any *intervention* of the *will* or *actions* of *men*. And so there could be no such difference as that of *good* and *bad men* in the *world*; for, if the *lettings* forth of *God's goodness* to the *world* be so *necessary*, all men must become *necessarily good*, if *God's goodness* be so great as to be able to make *men* so; which I suppose will not be questioned. By this then we *see* that the *communications* of *God's goodness* to the world are *free*, and depend upon the *eternal counsels* of his *will*, which is a *depth* too great for us to approach, or look into; by what necessity then, if *God* be a *free Agent*, and of *infinite wisdom*, as well as *goodness*, must we either assert the *eternity* of the *world*, or fear to deprive *God* of his *essential goodness*? Whereas to make the *communications* of *God's goodness* ad extra *necessary*, and therefore to make the *world* from *eternity*, that he might have an *object* to exercise his goodness on, is, to take as much off from the *infinite perfection* and *self-sufficiency* of the *divine nature* as it would seem to *flatter* his *goodness*. For *God* cannot be himself without his *goodness*; and if his *goodness* cannot be without some *creature* to shew or *display* it upon, *God* cannot be *perfect* nor *happy*, without his *creatures*, because these

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are *necessary issues* of his *goodness*; and consequently we make the *Being* of the *creatures* necessary to his *being God*. Which is the highest *derogation* from the *absolute perfection* of the *Divine Nature*. We assert then so much *goodness* in *God*, as none can be imagined *greater*, we assert, that it was the *communication* of this *Divine goodness* which gave *being* to the *world*; but withall we acknowledge *God* to be an *Agent infinitely wise* and *free*, who dispenseth this *goodness* of his in such a way and manner as is best pleasing to himself, though ever *agreeable* to his *Nature*. As God is infinitely *good* in himself, so whatever he *doth* is *suitable* to this *nature* of his; but the particular *determinations* of the *acts* of *God*'s beneficence belong to the *will* of *God*, as he is a most *free* and *independent Agent*; so that *goodness* as it imports the necessary *rectitude* of the *divine nature*, implies a *perfection* inseparable from the true *Idea* of *God*; but as it is taken for the *expressions* of *divine bounty* to somewhat without, as the object of it, it is not implied in our *conception* of *God*, as to his nature, but belongs to the free *determinations* of his *will*. We cannot then, neither ought we to *determine* any thing concerning the particular *ways* of *God*'s bounty towards the whole *Universe*, or any part of it, any farther than *God* himself hath declared it to us. Now we see the *world* exists, we have *cause* to *adore* that *goodness* of *God*, which not only gave a *being* to the *Universe*, but continually *upholds* it, and plentifully provides for all the *Creatures* which he hath made in it. Which the *Heathen* was so sensible of, that the *Stoick* in *Tully* taking notice of the abundant *provision* which is made in the *world*, not only for *man's necessity*, but for *delight* and *ornament*, cries out, *ut interdum Prônœa nostra Epicurea esse videatur: God's providence doth abundantly exceed man's necessity*. We see then from this Discourse, how *unsafe* and *unsatisfactory* (that I may not say *bold* and *presumptuous*) those *arguments* are, which are drawn from a general *consideration* of the *divine nature* and *goodness*, without regard had to the *determinations* of his *will*, as to the *existence* of *things* in the *world*. It cannot certainly then be an *argument* of any great *force* with any candid *Enquirers* after *truth* and *reason*, which hath been lately pleaded in the *behalf* of that *Pythagorean hypothesis* of the *præ-existence* of *souls*, viz. *That if it be good for men's souls to be at all, the sooner*

De Nat. Deor. l. 2.

they are, the better; but we are moſt certain that the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God will doe that which is beſt; and therefore if they can enjoy themſelves before they come into theſe terreſtrial bodies (it being better for them to enjoy themſelves than not) they muſt be before they come into theſe bodies. Wherefore the præ-exiſtence of ſouls is a neceſſary reſult of the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, who can no more fail to doe that which is beſt, than he can to underſtand it. I now ſeriouſly enquire of ſuch who love *reaſon* above *Plato* and *Pythagoras*, whether if the *eternity* of the *world* were put into the *argument* inſtead of the *præ-exiſtence* of *ſouls*, this *argument* would not hold as ſtrongly for that, as it doth for *præ-exiſtence*; and if I am bound to believe *præ-exiſtence* on this ground, I be not likewiſe bound to believe at leaſt the *ſouls* of *men eternal*, if not the *univerſe*. But how reconcilable the *eternity* of the *world* is to the *Pythagorick Cabbala* of the *Creation*, I am yet to underſtand. But if this *argument* doth not at all *inferr* the *eternity* of the *world*, as we have ſhewed it doth not, much leſs doth it *præ-exiſtence* of *ſouls*.

Sect. 8. We have thus far conſidered the *firſt Hypotheſis*, which is repugnant to *Moſes*, concerning the *origin* of the *Univerſe*, which is that which aſſerts the *eternity of the world as it is*; we come now to the ſecond, which attributes the *formation* of the *world* as it is, to *God*, as the *efficient cauſe*; but attributes *eternity* to the matter out of which the *world* was framed. I am not ignorant that ſome who would be taken for the *Maſters* of *Reaſon*, are ſo far from conceiving this *hypotheſis* to be repugnant to the *Text* of *Moſes*, that they conceive it to be the *genuine ſence* of it, *viz.* that there was a *præ-exiſtent matter*, out of which *God* formed the *world*. But I would willingly underſtand how *Moſes* would have expreſſed that *matter* it *ſelf* was *created*, ſuppoſing it had been his *intention* to have ſpoken it; for although the word ברא may not of it ſelf imply neceſſarily the *production* of *things* out of *nothing*, *i. e.* out of no *præ-exiſtent matter*; yet it is acknowledged by all, that no word uſed by the *Jews* is more *proper* to that than ברא is; and *P. Fagius* cites it from *R. Nachmani*, *that the Hebrew Language hath no other word to ſignifie ſuch a production out of nothing but* ברא. It is therefore a very weak manner of *arguing*, that becauſe ברא is ſometimes uſed for no more than.

Valkelius de vera rel. l. 2. c. 4.

than עשה, therefore the *world* was created out of *præ-existent matter*; all that can *rationally* be inferred, is, that from the mere *force* and *importance* of that word the *contrary* cannot be collected: but if other *places* of *Scripture* compared, and the *evidence* of *reason*, do make it clear that there could be no *præ existent matter* which was *uncreated*, then it will necessarily follow that *creation* must be taken in its proper sence. And in this sence it is evident, that not only *Jews* and *Christians*, but even the *Heathens* themselves understood *Moses*, as is plain by *Galen*, where he compares the *opinion* of *Moses*, with that of *Epicurus*, and ingenuously confesseth that of *Moses*, which attributed the *production* of *things* to *God*, to be far more *rational* and probable than that of *Epicurus*, which assigned the *origin* of things to a mere casual *concourse* of *atoms*: but withal adds, that he must dissent from both; and sides with *Moses* as to the *origin* of such things as depend on *generation*, but asserts the *præ-existence* of *matter*, and withall, that *God's power could not extend it self beyond the capacity of the matter which it wrought upon*. *Atque id est*, saith he, *in quo ratio nostra ac Platonis, tum aliorum qui apud Græcos de rerum natura recte conscripserunt, à Mose dissidet*. How true these words are, will appear afterwards. *Chalcidius* in his *Commentaries* on *Plato's Timæus*, where he speaks of the *origin* of ὕλη, which in him is still translated *Sylva*, and inquires into the different *opinions* of all *Philosophers* about it, takes it for granted, that according to *Moses*, this ὕλη had its *production* from God. *Hebræi sylvam generatam esse confitentur; quorum sapientissimus Moyses non humana facundia, sed divina, ut ferunt, inspiratione vegetatus, in eo libro, qui de genitura mundi censetur, ab exordio sic est profatus, juxta interpretationem LXX. prudentium; Initio Deus fecit cœlum & terram. Terra autem erat invisibilis & incompta. Ut vero ait Aquila; Caput rerum condidit Deus cœlum & terram; terra porro inanis erat & nihil; velut Symmachus; Ab exordio condidit Deus cœlum & terram. Terra porro fuit otiosum quid, confusumque, & inordinatum. Sed Origenes asseverat ita sibi ab Hebræis esse persuasum, quod in aliquantum sit à vera proprietate derivata interpretatio. Fuisse enim in exemplari, Terra autem stupida quadam erat admiratione. Omnia tamen hæc in unum aiunt concurrere, ut & generata sit ea quæ subjecta est uni-*

Galen. de usu part. l. 11.

Chalcid in Tim. p. 372.

verso

verſo corpori, ſylva, ſermoneſque ipſos ſic interpretantur. Where we find by the Teſtimony of *Chalcidius* an univerſal conſent as to the *production* of the univerſal *corporeal matter* by *God*; for that is all which is underſtood by his term of *generata eſt.* But this ſame Author afterwards tells us, that by *Heavens* and *Earth* in the firſt *verſe* of *Geneſis*, we are not to underſtand the *viſible Heavens* and *Earth*: *For*, ſaith he, *the Heavens, which are called the Firmament, were created after, and on the third day, when the Waters were ſeparated, the dry Land appeared, which was called Earth. Qui tumultuario conſenti ſunt intellectu, cælum hoc quod videmus, & terram qua ſubvehimur, dici putant; porro qui altius indagant, negant hoc cælum ab initio factum, ſed ſecundo die.* And therefore by the *Heavens* he underſtands *Incorpoream Naturam*, and by *earth*, ὕλη, or the *primigenial matter*. *And this*, ſaith he, *appears by the following words, The Earth was inviſible and without form*; i. e. this *corporeal matter*, before it was brought into order by the *power* and *wiſdom* of *God*, remained a *rude and indigeſted lump*; and that which is ſo, might well be called *inviſible* and *without form*. And therefore it is called *inanis* and *nihil*, becauſe of its *capacity* of *receiving* all *forms*, and having none of its own. *Symmachus* calls it *otioſa & indigeſta*; the former, becauſe of its *inability* to produce any thing of it ſelf: the latter, becauſe it wanted a *divine power* to bring it into due order. That *ſtupidity* and *admiration* which *Origen* attributes to it, he conceives to relate to the *Majeſty* of *God*, who was the Orderer and Contriver of it, *ſiquidem Opificis & Auctoris ſui Majeſtate capta ſtupuerit.* Thus we ſee that according to *Moſes*, the firſt *matter* of the *world* was *produced* by *God*, which is largely manifeſted by *Origen* againſt the *Marcioniſts*, a fragment of which is *extant* in his *Philocalia*; and by *Tertullian* againſt *Hermogenes*, and others, who from the opinion of the *præ-exiſtence* of *matter*, are called *Materiarii*.

Origen. Philoc. cap 24. Tertul. ad Hermog. per tot.

Sect. 9. Having thus cleared the ſence of *Moſes*, it is far more difficult to find out the true opinions of the ancient *Philoſophers* concerning the *production* or *eternity* of *corporeal matter*, there having been ſo great *diſſentions*, not only about the *thing* its ſelf, but about the opinions of ſome about it. For it is plain by *Plutarch*'s ψυχογονία, as well as the *diſcourſes* of the later

De Animæ procreat. e Timæo.

later *Platonists*, how eager some have been to interpret *Plato's Timæus* in favour of the *eternity*, at least of *matter*, if not of the *world*. But although *Plato* doth assert therein a *præexistence* of *rude matter*, before the *formation* of the *world*, yet I see no reason why he should be otherwise *understood* than in the same *sence* that we believe a *Chaos*, to have gone before the *bringing* the *world* into the order it is now in. And in that sence may those places in *Plutarch* be interpreted, ὑ γὰρ ἐν τῷ μὴ ὄντι ἡ γένεσις, ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ μὴ καλῶς ἢ ἱκανῶς ἔχοντος, and so likewise those following words, ὁ γὰρ θεὸς ὅτε σῶμα τὸ ἀσώματον, ὅτε ψυχὴν τὸ ἄψυχον ἐποίησεν: for the meaning may be no more than that *Plato* conceived that all the *productions* of the *kinds* of *things*, which are in the *world*, was out of a *præ-existent Hyle*, the one *spiritual* and *intelligible*, out of which he supposed *souls* to be formed, the other *sensible* and *corporeal*, out of which other *Beings* which were more *gross* and *material*, were produced. So *Chalcidius* tells us that both *Pythagoras* and *Plato* looked upon *constitutionem sylvæ* to be *opus providentiæ*: which I suppose relates not only to the bringing of *matter* into *form*, but to the *production* of *matter* it self. But after this he takes a great deal of *pains* to search out the true meaning of *Plato* concerning the *Origin* of *Hyle*, and mentions the great *dissentions* among the *Platonists* about it, and the *obscurity* of the *Timæus* in it. To him therefore I referr the Reader: Who likewise brings in *Numenius* largely discoursing concerning the *opinion* of *Pythagoras* about it, who condemns all those, as not understanding *Pythagoras*, who attribute to him the *production* of the *indeterminate Hyle*: These are his words, *Numenius ex Pythagoræ Magisterio Stoicorum hoc de initiis dogma refellens, Pythagoræ dogmate, cui concinere dicit dogma Platonicum, ait Pythagoram, Deum quidem singularitatis nominasse (Col. nomine appellasse) sylvam vero duitatis. Quam duitatem indeterminatam quidem, minime genitam, limitatam vero, generatam esse dicere. Hoc est, antequam exornaretur quidem, formamque & ordinem nanciscereture, sine ortu & generatione; exornatam vero atque illustratam, à Digestore Deo esse generatum. Atque ita quia generationis sit fortuna posterior, inornatum illud minime generatum, æquævum Deo, à quo est ordinatum, intelligi debeat. Sed nonnullos Pythagoreos, vim sententiæ non recte assecutos, putasse,*

Chalcid. in Tim. p. 377.

Pag. 401.

Pag. 393.

taſſe, dici etiam illam indeterminatam & immenſam duitatem, ab una ſingularitate inſtitutam, recedente à natura ſua ſingularitate, & in duitatis habitum migrante. But however theſe *Pythagoreans* might be deceived, who thought the *Unity* it ſelf became the *Deity*; yet it is evident by *Numenius*, that he looked on the *undetermined* and confuſed *matter* to have been *co-æval* with *God* himſelf, and not produced by him. And if *Numenius* be as much to be credited in this as when he calls *Plato*, *Moſes Atticus*, then the *Creation* of *univerſal matter* can be no part of *Pythagoras* his *philoſophick Cabbala*. But whatever were the opinions of *Plato* and *Pythagoras*, concerning the firſt *origin* of *matter*, we are certain that the *Stoicks* generally aſſerted the *improduction* of *matter*, and make that to be as *neceſſary* a *paſſive principle* for the *Being* of the *world*, as *God* is the *active* and *efficient Cauſe*. So *Diogenes Laertius* reports of the *Stoical principles* concerning the *origin* of the *Univerſe*:

V. Zenon. Δοκεῖ δ' αὐτοῖς ἀρχὰς εἶναι τοῦ ὅλου δύο· τὸ ποιοῦν καὶ τὸ πάσχον· τὸ μὲν οὖν πάσχον εἶναι τὴν ἄποιον οὐσίαν τὴν

V. Lipſium in Phyſiol. Sto. l. 1. c. 4. ὕλην· τὸ δὲ ποιοῦν, τὸν ἐν αὐτῇ λόγον τὸν θεόν. *They make two principles of the Univerſe, one active, and the other paſſive; the paſſive, an eſſence without quality, called Hyle, or confuſed matter; the active, the reaſon which acts in the other, which is God.* Theſe two Principles *Seneca* calls *Cauſa & Materia*;

Epiſt. 65. *eſſe vero debet*, ſaith he, *aliquid unde fiat*; *deinde*, *à quo fiat*, *hoc cauſa eſt*, *illud materia.* Although *Seneca* ſeems to make

Præfat. ad Nat. Quæſt. Eclog. Phyſic. a query of it elſewhere; *quantum Deus poſſit? materiam ipſe ſibi formet, an data utatur?* But *Zeno* is expreſs in *Stobæus*,

Οὐσίαν εἶναι τῶν ὅλων πάντων τὸ μὲν ὑλικὸν, ταύτην δὲ πᾶσαν ἀΐδιον, ὅτε πλείω γιγνομένων ὅτε ἐλαττουμένων. *The firſt eſſence of all is matter, which is eternal, and not capable of acceſſion, or diminution.*

In Tim. p. 388. To the ſame purpoſe *Chalcidius* ſpeaks, *Stoici ortum ſylvæ rejiciunt, quin potius ipſam & Deum, duo totius rei ſumunt initia; Deum, ut opificem; Sylvam, ut quæ operationi ſubjiciatur. Una quidem eſſentia præditos facientem, & quod fit ac patitur, id corpus eſſe; diverſa vero virtute; quia faciat, Deum; quia fiat, Sylvam eſſe.*

Sect. 10. Having now found out the certain Aſſertors among the *Heathen Philoſophers* of the *eternity* and *improduction* of *matter* as the *paſſive principle* of *things*, we come to *examine* the *reaſon* of this *Hypotheſis*, aad whether there were foundation enough for

for this *matter* to subsist upon from all *eternity*? It might be sufficient *prejudice* against this opinion, that it was built on the same infirm *conclusions* which that of the *eternity* of the whole *world* was, *viz.* that *Maxim* which *Lipsius* attributes to *Democritus*, but was embraced by all those *Philosophers* who denied *production* of *matter*, μηδὲν ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος γίνεσθαι, μηδὲ εἰς τὸ μὴ ὂν φθείρεσθαι, *that nothing could be produced out of nothing, nor could return into nothing*; which as we have already said, was only taken up from the established *order* of the *Universe*, and the *manner* of *production* of *material Beings*. But this is not all we have to charge this *Hypothesis* with; for, *Physiol. Stoic. l. 2. c. 2.*

1. It is repugnant to the *Natural Notion* of a *Deity*, which must imply in it an *omnipotent power*; For otherwise we degrade him to the imbecillity of *finite creatures*, if he cannot produce any thing which doth not imply a *contradiction*: but what *contradiction* is there in this, that *God* should give a *Being* to that which had none before? For that is all we understand by *Creation*, viz. the *producing* of *something* out of *nothing*, or which had nothing out of which it was produced. Now what *repugnancy* is there to any free principle of *reason*, that a *power infinite* should raise an *Insect* into *Being* without any *passive principle* out of which it was *caused*; and if an *Infinite power* can do that, it may as well produce the *world* out of *nothing*, else the *power* would not be *Infinite*; for it would have its bounds set, that thus far it could *go* and no further. Now if such a *power* in *God* implies no *contradiction* it its self, I say, the *asserting* the necessary *existence* of *matter* implies a *contradiction* to this *power*. For, 1. A *power* to produce *something* out of *nothing* would be to no purpose, if a *passive principle* or *præ-existent matter* be necessary to the *production* of any thing; and so that *Being* which hath a *power* to *produce something* out of *nothing*, hath only a power to produce *something* out of *something*, which is a plain *contradiction*. 2. If God hath a *power* to produce *something* out of *nothing*, either this *power* doth extend to the *production* of this *matter*, or *not*; if it doth, then it *depends* on him; if not, his *power* is not *infinite*, and so the same *power* is *infinite* and not *infinite*; which is another *contradiction*. So that it is plainly repugnant to the *notion* of a *God* to assert the *necessary* and *eternal existence* of *matter*.

2. If *matter* be *unproduced*, then *neceſſary exiſtence* muſt belong to it as well as to *God*; and if *neceſſary exiſtence* belongs to *matter*, *infinite power* muſt belong to it too; For whatever neceſſarily *exiſts* is *ſelf-originated*; whatever is *ſelf-originated*, could not by any *cauſe* whatſoever be *hindered* from *Being*; what cannot by any *cauſe* be hindered from *Being*, hath *infinite power*; what hath *infinite power*, may produce any *thing*, and is *God*, and ſo *matter* cannot be a mere *paſſive principle*, but muſt be an *active*, and ſo muſt be *God* himſelf, or elſe there muſt be more *Gods* than one. To an argument ſomething of this nature *Hermogenes* in *Tertullian* replies, that *matter* would not loſe the *Name* or *Nature* of *matter*, becauſe of its *Co-eternity* with *God*, neither could it be *God* merely on that account, unleſs it had other *things* that were agreeable to the *Nature* of *God* as well as that. But I have already ſhewed that *neceſſary exiſtence* implies other *perfections* going along with it: which is likewiſe thus proved by *Tertullian* in anſwer to *Hermogenes*; the *reaſon* of the *imperfections* which are to be ſeen in any *creatures*, is from hence, that they derive their *Beings* from a *higher cauſe*, who creates them in what *order* he pleaſes; but that which hath its *original* from *its ſelf*, muſt on that *account* want thoſe *imperfections* which other *creatures* in the World have; and therefore if *neceſſary exiſtence* be of the *Nature* of *matter*, all other *perfections* muſt belong to it too: and ſo there can be no *ſuperiority* and *inferiority* between *God* and *matter*, becauſe on both ſides there will be *neceſſary exiſtence*. *Divinitas gradum non habet, utpote unica*: and ſo the eternal *exiſtence* of *matter*, is repugnant to the *unity* of *God*.

Adverſ. Hermog. c. 4.

Cap. 7.

3. *It is repugnant to the Independency of God*: for it makes *God ſubject to matter*, and not *matter* to *God*. For if *God* cannot produce any thing without *præ-exiſtent matter*, the *matter* is *neceſſary* to his *action*, and ſo *God* muſt depend on that which he can do *nothing* without; and ſo *God's* uſing *matter*, is as *Tertullian* ſpeaks, *ex neceſſitate mediocritatis ſuæ*, to help him in the production of things. *Nemo non ſubjicitur ei cujus eget ut poſſit uti*, as he goes on. Thus *matter* at laſt is crept above the *Deity*, that *God* can do nothing without its *aid* and *concurrence*; and ſo as *Tertullian* ſharply ſays, *God is beholding to matter for every Being known to the world*; *grande beneficium*

Cap. 8.

ficium Deo contulit ut haberet hodie per quam Deus cognosceretur, & omnipotens vocaretur, nisi quod jam non omnipotens, si non & hoc potens ex nihilo omnia proferre. Thus we see how irreconcilable this *Hypothesis* is with these *Attributes* of *God*.

4. *It is repugnant to the immensity of God.* For either *God* did exist *separate* from this *eternal matter*, or was *conjoyned* with it; if *conjoyned* with it, then both made but one Being, as *Maximus*, or *Origen* argues; if *separate* from it, then there must be *something between* them, and so there will be three *real improduced things*. If it be answered that they are neither *conjoyned* nor *separate*, but *God* is in *matter* as in his proper *place*, as the *Stoicks* asserted, it is easily replyed, that either then he is in a *part* of *matter*, or the whole *matter*; if in a *part* only, he cannot be *immense*; if in the whole as his *adæquate place*, how could he then ever *frame* the World? For either he must then recede from that part in which he was, and *contract* himself into a narrower compass that he might *fashion* that part of the World which he was about, or else he might likewise frame part of *himself* with that part of the World which he was then framing of, which consequence is unavoidable on the *Stoical Hypothesis* of *God's* being corporeal and confined to the World as his proper place. And so much for this second *Hypothesis* concerning the *Origin* of the *Universe*, which supposeth the *eternity* of *matter* as *co-existing* with *God*. *Orig. Philoc. c.* 24.

I come now to that which makes most noise in the World, which is the *Atomical* or *Epicurean Hypothesis*, but will appear to be as *irrational* as either of the foregoing, as far as it concerns the giving an account of the *Origin* of the *Universe*. For otherwise supposing a *Deity* which produced the world and put it into the order it is now in, and supremely *governs* all things in the world, that many of the *Phænomena* of the *Universe*, are far more intelligibly explained by *matter* and *motion* than by *substantial forms*, and *real qualities*, few free and unprejudiced minds do now scruple. But because these little *particles* of *matter* may give a tolerable account of many *appearances* of *nature*, that therefore there should be nothing else but *matter* and *motion* in the World, and that the *Origin* of the *Universe* should be from no *wiser* principle than the casual concourse of these *Atoms*, is one of the evidences of the *Sect.* 11.

proneneſs of mens minds to be *intoxicated* with thoſe opinions they are once in love with. When they are not content to allow an *Hypotheſis* its due place and ſubſerviency to *God*, and *providence*, but think theſe *Atoms* have no force at all in them unleſs they can *extrude* a *Deity* quite out of the World. For it is moſt evident that it was not ſo much the *truth* as the *ſerviceableneſs* of this *Hypotheſis*, which hath given it entertainment among men of *Atheiſtical* ſpirits. *Epicurus* himſelf in his Epiſtle to *Pythocles* urgeth that as a conſiderable circumſtance in his opinion that he brought no *God* down upon the ſtage to put things in order, ᾗ ἡ θεία φύσις πρὸς ταῦτα μηδαμῶ προσαγέσθω, which his Paraphraſt *Lucretius* hath thus rendred.

Apud. Diog. Laert. l. 10. *Lucret. de Nat. l.* 5.

Nequaquam nobis divinitus eſſe paratam
Naturam rerum.

If this opinion then be *true*, the *hiſtory* of the *creation* quite falls to the ground, on which account we are obliged more particularly to conſider the *reaſon* of it. The *Hypotheſis* then of *Epicurus* is, *that before the world was brought into that form and order it is now in, there was an infinite empty ſpace in which were an innumerable company of ſolid particles or Atoms of different ſizes and ſhapes, which by their weight were in continual motion, and that by the various occurſions of theſe, all the bodies of the Univerſe were framed into that order they now are in.* Which is fully expreſſed by *Dionyſius* in *Euſebius*, and very agreeably to the ſence of *Epicurus* in his Epiſtles to *Herodotus* and *Pythocles*, and to what *Plutarch* reports of the ſence of *Epicurus*, though he names him not (if at leaſt that book be his which *Muretus* denies) the words of *Dionyſius* are theſe concerning the *Epicureans*, οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἀτόμους ἀποστίλβης ἄφθαρτά τινα καὶ σμικρότατα σώματα, πλῆθος ἀναρίθμητα, καί τι χωρίον ἄπειρον, μέγεθος ἀπεῖρεσιον προβαλλόμενοι, ταύτας δή φασι τὰς ἀτόμους ὡς ἔτυχεν ἐν τῷ κενῷ φερομένας, αὐτομάτως τε συμπίπτουσας ἀλλήλαις διὰ ῥύμην ἀτακτον καὶ συμπλεκομένας διὰ τὸ πολύσχημον ἀλλήλων ὑπολαμβάνεσθαι, καὶ ὕπω τόνδε κόσμον, καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ, μᾶλλον δὲ κόσμους ἀπείρους ἀπογεννᾶν. So that according to this opinion, all the *account* we have of the *Origin* of the world, is from this general *Rendezvouz* of *Atoms* in this *infinite ſpace*, in which after many *encounters* and *facings about*, they fell into their ſeveral *troops*, and made up that ordered *Battalia* which now the

Præp. Evang. l. 14. *c.* 22. *p.* 421. *R. St.*

De Placitis Phil. l. c. 4. *Annot. in Senec. de provid.*

the world is the *Scheme* of. It was not imprudently done of *Epicurus* to make the worlds *infinite*, as well as his *space* and *Atoms*; for by the same reason that his *Atoms* would make *one* world, they might make a *thousand*; and who would spare for *worlds*, when he might make them so easily? *Lucretius* gives us in so exact an account of the several *courses* the *Atoms* took up in disposing themselves into *bodies*, as though he had been *Muster-Master-General* at the great *Rendezvouz*; for thus he speaks of his *Atoms*. *De Nat. rer. l. 1.*

Quæ quia multimodis, multis mutata per omne
Ex Infinito vexantur percita plagis,
Omne genus motus & cœtus experiundo,
Tandem deveniunt in taleis disposituras,
Qualibus hæc rebus consistit summa creata.

And more particularly afterwards;

Sed quia multa modis multis primordia rerum *Lib. 5.*
Ex Infinito jam tempore percita plagis,
Ponderibusque suis consuerunt concita ferri,
Omnimodisque coire, atque omnia pertentare,
Quæcunque inter se possunt congressa creare;
Ut non sit mirum, si in taleis disposituras
Deciderunt quoque, & in taleis venere meatus,
Qualibus hæc rerum genitum nunc summa novando.

Thus we see the *substance* of the *Epicurean Hypothesis*, that there was an *Infinite* number of *Atoms*, which by their frequent *occursions* did at last meet with those of the same nature with them, and these being conjoyned together made up those *bodies* which we see; so that all the account we are able to give according to this *Hypothesis* of all the *Phænomena* of the *Universe*, is from the fortuitous *concourse* of the *Atoms* in the first forming of the world, and the different contexture of them in bodies. And this was delivered by the ancient *Epicureans* not with any doubt or *Hesitation*, but with the greatest *confidence* imaginable. So *Tully* observes of *Velleius* the *Epicurean*, beginning his discourse, *fidenter sane ut solent isti, nihil tam verens quam ne dubitare de aliqua re videretur; tanquam modo ex Deorum concilio, & ex Epicuri intermundiis descendisset:* *Confidence* was the peculiar *genius* of that *sect*, which we shall see in them to be accompanied with very little reason. *De Nat. Deor. l. 1.*

For

Sect. 12. For those *two things* which make any *principles* in *Philosophy* to be rejected, this *Atomical Hypothesis* is unavoidably charged with; and those are, *If the principles be taken up without sufficient ground in reason for them; and if they cannot give any sufficient account of the Phænomena of the world.* I shall therefore make it appear, that this *Hypothesis*, as to the *Origin* of the *Universe*, *is first, merely precarious*, and built on no sufficient grounds of reason. *Secondly, That it cannot give any satisfactory account of the Origin of things.*

1. That it is a *precarious Hypothesis*, and hath no evidence of *reason* on which it should be taken up; and that will be proved by two things. 1. *It is such an Hypothesis as the Epicureans themselves could have no certainty of according to their own principles.* 2. *That the main principles of the Hypothesis it self are repugnant to those Catholick Laws of nature which are observed in the Universe.*

1. *The Epicureans according to their own principles could have no certainty of the truth of this Hypothesis.* And that, 1. *Because they could have no certain evidence of its truth.* 2. *Because their way of proving it was insufficient.*

1. *That they could have no certain evidence of the truth of it*, I prove from those *criteria*, which *Epicurus* lays down as the only certain *rules* of judging the *truth* of things by; and those were *Sense*, *Anticipation* and *Passion*. Let *sense* be never so *infallible* a rule of judgment, yet it is impossible there should be any *evidence* to *sense* of the *truth* of this *Hypothesis*; and let him extend his τὸ προσμαρτύρουν as long as he please, which was his great *help* for *correcting* the errors of sense, *viz.* as it was in the *Roman Court* when the *case* was not clear, *ampliandum est*; So *Epicurus* would have the *object* represented every *way* it could be before he past his *judgment*; yet this prudent *caution* would do him no good for this *Hypothesis*, unless he were so *wise* as to stay till this *world* were crumbled into *Atoms* again, that by that he might *judge* of the *Origin* of it. There is but one way left to find out the *truth* of things *inevident* to *sense*, (as by *Epicurus* his own confession all these *Atoms* are, which are now the *component particles* of *bodies*; much more those which by their fortuitous *concourse* gave *Being* to the world) and that is, if something evident to *sense* doth apparently prove it, which is his

his way of *proving* a *Vacuity* in *nature* and *motion*; but tho' that be easily answered by *principles different* from those of *Epicurus*, and more *rational*; yet that very way of *probation* fails him in this present *Hypothesis*. For what is there evident to *sense* which proves a fortuitous *concourse* of *Atoms* for the *production* of things? may if we grant him that the *composition* of *bodies* is nothing else but the *contexture* of these insensible *particles*, yet this is far from being an evidence to sense, that these *particles* without any *wise* and directing *providence* should make up such *bodies* as we see in the world. And here when we speak of the *evidence* of *sense*, we may well ask as the *Stoick* in *Tully* doth, whether ever *Epicurus* found a *Poem* made by the casual *throwing* of *letters* together; and if a *concourse* of *Atoms* did produce the world, *cur porticum, cur templum, cur domum, cur urbem non potest? why did it never produce a cloyster, a temple, a house, a city*, which are far easier things than the world? I know *Epicurus* will soon reply, *that things are otherwise in the world now than when it was first produced*; I grant it, and from thence prove, that because no such thing ever *happens* in the *world* now, as a merely casual *concourse* of *Atoms* to produce any things, *Epicurus* could have no evidence from *sense* at all to find out the truth of his *Hypothesis* by. And as little *relief* can he find from his second *Criterium*, viz. *Anticipation*; for by his own acknowledgment, all *Anticipation* depends on the *senses*, and men have it only one of these four ways. 1. By *incursion*, as the *species* of a man is preserved by the sight of him. 2. By *proportion*, as we can enlarge or contract that species of a man either into a Gyant or Pigmy. 3. By *similitude*, as we may fansie the image of a City by resemblance to one which we have seen. 4. By *composition*, whereby we may joyn different images together, as of a horse and man to make a *Centaure*. Now though it be very questionable how some of these ways belong to a *Criterium* of *truth*, yet none of them, reach our *case*; for there can be no *Incursion* of *insensible particles* as such upon our senses; we may indeed by *proportion* imagine the *parvitude* of them: but what is this to the proving the *truth* of the *Hypothesis*? *Similitude* can do no good, unless *Epicurus* had ever seen a *world* made so; the only relief must be from *composition*, and that will prove the

De Nat. Deor. l. 2.

V. Gassendum de Logica Epicuri. Op. To. 1. c. 7. Can. 7.

Origin

Origin of the *world* by *Atoms* to be as *true* as that there are *Centaures in the world*, which we verily believe. These are the only *Criteria* which *Epicurus* would judge of the truth of natural *things* by (for the third, *Passion* relates wholly to things *Moral* and not *Physical)* and now let any one judge, whether the *Hypothesis* of the *Origin* of the *Universe* by *Atoms* can ever be proved true, either by the *judgment* of *sense*, or by *Anticipation*.

Sect. 13. 2. *The way they had to prove this Hypothesis was insufficient*; and that was by proving that the *bodies* of the world are *compounded* of such *insensible particles*; Now, granting the thing, I deny the *consequence*; for what though the *composition* of *bodies* be from the *contexture* of *Atoms*, doth it therefore follow, that these *particles* did *casually* produce these *bodies*? nay doth it at all follow, that because *bodies* upon their *resolution* do fall into *insensible particles* of different *size*, *figure* and *motion*, therefore these *particles* must be *præ-existent* to all *bodies* in the *world*? For it is plain, that there is now an *Universal lump* of *matter* out of which these *insensible particles* arise, and whither they return on the *dissolution* of *bodies*; and all these various *corpuscles* may be of the same *uniform substance* only with the *alteration* of *size*, *shape* and *motion*; but what then? doth this prove, that because particular *bodies* do now *emerge* out of the *various configuration* and *motion* of *insensible particles* of that *matter* which *exists* in the world, that therefore this whole *matter* was produced by the *casual occursions* of these *Atoms*? It will ask more time and pains than is usually taken by the *Philosophers* either ancient or modern, to prove that those *things* whatsoever they are, whether *elements* or *particles* out of which *bodies* are supposed to be *compounded*, do exist *separately* from such compounded bodies, and *antecedently* to them. We find no *Aristotelian* elements *pure* in the world, nor any *particles* of *matter* destitute of such a *size*, *figure* and *motion* as doth *make* some *body* or other. From whence then can we inferr either the *existence* of *Aristotle's materia prima*, without *quiddity*, *quantity*, or *quality*, or the *Epicurean Atoms* without such a *contexture* as makes up some bodies in the world? Our profound *Naturalist* Dr. *Harvey*, after his most accurate *search* into the *natures* and *Generation* of *things*, delivers

delivers this as his experience and *judgment* concerning the commonly reputed *elements* or *principles* of bodies. For speaking of the different opinions of *Empedocles*, and *Hippocrates*, and *Democritus*, and *Epicurus*, concerning the composition of bodies, he adds, *Ego vero neque in animalium productione, nec omnino in ulla corporum similarium generatione, (sive ea partium animalium, sive plantarum, lapidum, mineralium,* &c. *fuerit) vel congregationem ejusmodi, vel miscibilia diversa in generationis opere unienda præexistere, observare unquam potui.* And after explaining the *way* which he conceived most *rational* and *consonant* to *experience* in the *generation* of things, he concludes his discourse with these words; *Idemque in omni generatione fieri crediderim; adeo ut corpora similaria mista, elementa sua tempore priora non habeant, sed illa potius elementis suis prius existant (nempe Empedoclis atque Aristotelis igne, aqua, aere, terra, vel Chymicorum sale, sulphure, & Mercurio, aut Democriti atomis) utpote natura quoque ipsis perfectiora. Sunt, inquam, mista & composita, etiam tempore priora elementis quibuslibet sic dictis, in quæ illa corrumpuntur & desinunt; dissolvuntur, scilicet, in ista ratione potius quam re ipsa & actu. Elementa itaque quæ dicuntur, non sunt priora istis rebus quæ generantur aut oriuntur; sed posteriora potius, & reliquiæ magis quam principia. Neque Aristoteles ipsemet aut alius quispiam unquam demonstravit, elementa in rerum natura separatim existere, aut principia esse corporum similarium.* If then none of these things which *bodies* are *resolved* into, and are supposed to be *compounded* of, either have been or can be proved to exist *separate* from and *antecedent* to those *bodies* which they compound, what then becomes of all our company of *Atoms* which are supposed by their *concourse* in an *infinite space* to be the *origin* of the *world*? I know not where to find them, unless *dancing* with the *School-men's Chimera's* in a *vacuum*, or in a *space* as *empty* as the *infinite* one, *viz.* some *Epicurean's brains*. Neither therein will they be much unlike their great *master Epicurus*, if we believe the *character* which the *Stoick* in *Tully* gives of him, who saith he was *homo sine arte, sine literis, insultans in omnes, sine acumine ullo, sine auctoritate, sine lepore.* But allowing the *Stoick* some of that *passion*, (which he disclaimed so much) in these *words*; yet we may rather believe what *Tully* himself elsewhere speaks of *Epicurus* his *senti-*

De Generat. Anim. Exercit.

De Nat. Deor. l. 2.

ments, that they were none of them *handſom* or *becoming* a man. *At ille quid ſentit?* ſaith he of *Epicurus*; and ſoon replies, *ſentit autem nihil unquam elegans, nihil decorum*; and in another place ſpeaking of his *Morals*, he ſaith, *nihil generoſum ſapit atque magnificum, there was nothing noble and generous in him.* Which Cenſure of *Epicurus*, all the pains that *P. Gaſſendus* hath taken in the vindication of the *life* and *opinions* of *Epicurus*, hath not been able to wipe off. For although we ſhould yield what that *learned man* ſo much contends for, that all the *calumnies* which were caſt on *Epicurus* ariſe from the *antipathy* between *Zeno* and the following *Stoicks* and the *School* of *Epicurus*; yet all this will not make *Epicurus* to have been comparable with ſome other *Philoſophers* for *parts* and *judgment*, whoſe Principles have ſomewhat more *generous* and *venerable* in them, than the *Morals* of *Epicurus* had, taking them in their more refined ſence.

De Divinat. l. 1. *De Finibus, l.* 1.

Sect. 14. But it is not the *Morality* of *Epicurus* which we now enquire after; our buſineſs is to ſee how well he acquits himſelf in rendring an *account* of the *origin* of the *Univerſe* without a *Deity*. And ſo we come to conſider the *Hypotheſis* it ſelf, whether it be *rational* or no, or conſiſtent with the *Catholick Laws* of *nature* which appear in the *world*. Two things I ſhall here enquire into, which are the main *principles* of *Epicurus*, *viz.* the *motion* of theſe *Atoms* in the *infinite ſpace*, and the *manner* of the *concretion* of *bodies* by the *concourſe* of theſe *Atoms*.

1. I begin with their *motion*; which *Epicurus* attributes to his *Atoms* without any *heſitation*, and yet never undertakes to give an account of the *origin* of that *motion*; which argues his whole *Hypotheſis* to be extreamly *precarious*. The thing then, (which he muſt aſſume as his main *principle*, without which all his other doe nothing) is, That *motion* doth inſeparably belong to the leaſt *Atom* or *inſenſible particle*; for without this there cannot be imagined any *concourſe* of *Atoms* at all, much leſs any ſuch *contexture* of bodies out of them. But for one to ſay that *Atoms* move, *becauſe it is their nature to move*, and give no other *account* of it, is ſo *precarious*, that it will never give the leaſt *ſatisfaction* to an inquiſitive mind. And it will be the leaſt of all *pardonable* in the *Exploders* of *ſubſtantial forms* and *occult qualities*, when the *origin* of the whole

whole *world* is resolved into an *occult quality* which gives *motion* to *Atoms*. And herein the *Atomists* out-doe the most credulous *Peripateticks*, seeing they lay the prime *foundation* of the *world* and of their own *philosophy* together in a *thing* they can give no rational *account* of at all, which is, the *motion* of *Atoms* in an *infinite vacuity*. If it be replied, which is all *Epicurus* hath to say, *that the motion of Atoms depends upon their gravity*; the question returns upon him with the same *violence*, how comes this *gravity* to belong to these *Atoms* in such an *empty space*, where there can be no *impulsion* from other *bodies*, no *attraction* from any *magnetick particles* which are supposed to be the *causes* of the descent of *heavy bodies*? Nay, *Epicurus* himself takes away any *center* of that *motion* of *Atoms*; and yet attributes a necessary *descent* to his *Atoms* by virtue of their *gravity*; and if a *Philosopher* may *beg* such things as these are, so repugnant to the *Phænomena* of *nature*, without assigning any other reason for them, but that it is their *nature*, let us never venture *Philosophizing* more, but sit down in that contented *piece* of *ignorance* which attributes the *causes* of every thing unto *specifick forms* and *occult qualities*. For this is so *shamefull* a piece of *beggery*, that *P. Gassendus* doth more than once disclaim it, and in his discourse of *motion* doth prove an *impossibility* of *motion* in an *infinite empty space*. Might not *Epicurus* then have saved his *credit* better by sitting down with the *opinions* of his *fore-fathers*, than thus to go a *begging* for such *Hypotheses*, which none, who are not resolved to be *ignorant*, will be ready to grant him?

Physic. s. 1. l. 3. c. 7. De apparent. magnitud. Solis humilis & sublimis, ep. 4. s. 3. De motu Physic. s. 1. l. 5. c. 2. V. ep de motu impresso à motore translato. To. 3. op.

Sect. 15.

But yet this is not all, but according to this fundamental *principle* of *Epicurus*, viz. That there is a *principle* of *motion* in every insensible *particle* of matter, he plainly overthrows another *principle* of his, which is, the *solidity* and different *magnitude* of these *Atoms*. These *particles* are supposed so *solid*, that *Dionysius* in *Eusebius* tells us the account given why they are called ἄτομοι was, διὰ τὸ ἄλυτον στερρότητα, because of their *indissoluble firmness*; and the different *sizes* of these *Atoms* is so necessary a principle, that from thence they undertake to resolve many *phænomena* of the *Universe*: let us now see how consistent these things are with the inseparable property of *motion* belonging to *Atoms*: For if there be *particles* of such different *sizes*, then it is plain that there are some *particles* which may

Præp. Evangel. l. 14. c. 22.

not only be conceived to be *bigger* than *others*, but are *really* ſo; and ſo there muſt be more parts of *matter imagined* in this bigger *particle* than in *another* leſs; and if there be more *parts*, theſe *parts* may be conceived ſeparate from *each* other, that this *particle* may be *equal* to the other; now then, I demand, if *motion* doth inſeparably belong to the leaſt *particle* of *matter*, how comes *one* to be *bigger* than the other? for herein we ſee that every *particle* is not in diſtinct *motion*; for there cannot but be more imaginable *particles* in an *Atom* of a *bigger* ſize than in a leſs; and if ſo, there muſt be ſome *union* of thoſe *imaginable particles* in that bigger *Atom*; and how could ſuch an union be without *reſt*, and what *reſt* could there be if *motion* doth inſeparably belong to every *particle* of *matter*? And ſo it muſt be in all thoſe *Atoms* which are ſuppoſed to have *angles* and *hooks*, in order to their better *catching* hold of each other, for the *compoſition* of bodies; how come theſe *hooks* and *angles* to be annexed to this *Atom*? for an *Atom* may be without them; whence comes this *union*, if ſuch a *principle* of *motion* be in each *particle*? if it be anſwered, *that motion did belong to all theſe particles, but by degrees the leſſer particles hitting together made up theſe angled and hooked particles*; I ſoon reply, that the *difficulty* returns more *ſtrongly*; for if theſe *angled* and *hooked particles* be ſuppoſed *neceſſary* to the *contexture* and *union* of *bodies*; how came thoſe leaſt imaginable *particles* ever to *unite* without ſuch *hooks* and *angles*? And ſo the *queſtion* will return *in infinitum*. If then the *ſolidity* and *indiviſibility* of theſe *angled Atoms*, doth depend on the *union* and *reſt* of thoſe leſſer imaginable *particles* joyned together, then it is evident that *motion* is no *inſeparable property* of all theſe *particles*, but ſome are capable of *union*, in order to the making of ſuch *hooks* and *angles*, which are neceſſary for the *contexture* of *bodies*; and where there is *union* and *ſolidity*, there is *reſt*, which is at leaſt accompanied with it, if it be not one of the great *cauſes* of it. And without which the *Atomiſts*, of all other *Philoſophers*, will be leaſt able to give an account of *firmneſs* in *bodies* when they make *bodies* to conſiſt of an *aggregation* of *particles*, by which it will be very hard finding a ſufficient account of the difference between *fluid* and *firm bodies*, unleſs it be from the quicker *motion* and *agitation* of the *particles* of *fluid bodies*, and the

V. Deſcartes, princip. p. 2. art. 54,55,56.

reſt

rest of the *small* and *contiguous parts* that make up the *firm body*, according to that *Catholick Law* of *nature*, whereby *things continue in the state they are in till some stronger force puts them out of it.* The only thing which the *Epicurean Atomists* have left to give any account of the *solidity* of *particles* of such different *sizes*, is, *the want of vacuity*; for, say they, *the ground of divisibility of bodies is the interspersion of a disseminated vacuum*; *now where there is no vacuity, though the particles be of different size, yet they may be solid and indivisible.* But this is taken off by the instance produced against other persons by that *ingenious* and *honourable* Person Mr. *Boyle* in his *Physiological Essays*, which is to this purpose, *Suppose two of these presumed indivisible particles, both smooth and of a cubical figure, should happen to lie upon one another, and a third should chance to be fitly placed upon the upper of the two; what should hinder but that this Aggregate may by the violent knock of some other corpuscles be broken in the midst of the whole concretion, and consequently in the middlemost body?* For suppose them as solid as may be, yet since *corpuscles* as hard as they, can be made very violently to knock against them, why may not those grate or *break* the middlemost *corpuscle*, or any of the others? And if there be a *possibility* of *breaking* off these *cubical particles* in the middle, then mere want of *vacuity* is no sufficient account of their being *indivisible.* By this we see how far the *Atomists* are from giving any rational account of the *origin* of the *motion* of the *Atoms* themselves without a *Deity.* History of *Fluid.* and *Firm.* p. 202.

2. Supposing this *motion* to be granted them, yet they *cannot give any satisfactory account of the manner of concretion of bodies by the casual occursions of these Atoms moving in an infinite empty space.* Which appears from those gross and extravagant *suppositions* of *Epicurus*, in order to the making these *Atoms* of his so *hit* together that they make up any bodies by their contexture. *Sect.* 16.

1. He supposeth as it were *two regions*, a *superiour* and *inferiour* in an *infinite empty space*, which hath no *center* at all in it, nor any *body*, from which to measure those respects of *above* and *below*, as appears by his *Epistle* to *Herodotus*, wherein he saith, *these terms of* ἄνω and κάτω, *or upwards and downwards, must be conceived without any bounds or limits at all.*

So

So that though we conceive ſomething ſuperiour, we muſt imagine nothing ſupreme, and ſo on the contrary. Whereby it is evident, as *Gaſſendus* confeſſeth, that *Epicurus* thought the *ſurface* of the *Earth* to be a *plain*, and this *plain* to be *continued* up in a *level ſuperficies* to the *heavens*, and ſo to all that immenſe *ſpace* of the *Univerſe*. So that all thoſe *heavy bodies* which ſhould fall downwards in any *parts* of the wideſt *diſtance* on the earth, as in *Europe*, *Aſia*, and *Africa*, would never *meet* (if they continued their *motion*) in the *center* of the *earth*, but would continue their *motion* ſtill in a *parallel* line; and ſo he imagined that which is ſaid to be *above* as to us, was *really* the upper part of the *world*, and ſo the *deſcent* of his *Atoms*, muſt neceſſarily be *downwards* towards the *earth*, according to the *weight* of them. And was not this a worthy *mathematical* ſuppoſition, for one who would undertake to give an account of the *origin* of the *Univerſe* without a *Deity*?

Phyſic. ſ. 1. l. 3. c. 7.

This *motion* of *deſcent* by reaſon of the *gravity* of *Atoms* would not ſerve his turn; for if the *Atoms* moved downwards thus in a *parallel* line, how was it poſſible for them ever to meet for the *contexture* of bodies? Now for this purpoſe he invented *a motion of declination*; for finding the motion *ad lineam*, or *ad perpendiculum* as ſome call it, could not poſſibly produce thoſe *varieties* of *bodies* which are in the *Univerſe*, he ſuppoſed therefore the *deſcent* not to be in a *perpendicular right line*, but to *decline* a little, that ſo ſeveral *particles* in their *deſcent* might make ſome *occurſions* one upon another. And this *Epicurus* added to *Democritus*; but therein as *Tully* obſerves, was very unhappy, that where he adds to *Democritus*, *ea quæ corrigere vult, mihi quidem depravare videatur*; that he marr'd what *Democritus* had ſaid, by *mending* of it. The reaſon of which *motion* of *declination* is thus given by *Lucretius*,

De Fin. l. 1.

De rerum nat. l. 2.

Quod niſi declinare ſolerent, omnia deorſum
Imbris uti guttæ caderent per Inane profundum;
Nec foret offenſus natus, neque plaga creata
Principiis, ita nil unquam natura creaſſet.

It was obvious to object, That, according to the *Principles* of *Epicurus*, there could have been no *concourſe* at all of *Atoms* in an

an *infinite space*, on the two *grounds* he went on, which were the natural *descent* of *Atoms*, and the *æqui velocity* of the *motion* of all *Atoms* of what size so ever, which he likewise asserted (although one would think, if *gravity* were the *cause* of *motion*, then the more *gravity*, the *swifter* the *motion* would be) from hence, I say, it were not easie to conceive how the *Atoms* should embrace each other in a *parallel line*, if they fell *down*, as *Lucretius* expresseth it, *like drops of rain*; and therefore they saw a necessity to make their *motion decline* a little, that so they might *justle* and *hit* one upon another. But this *oblique motion* of the *Atoms*, though it be the only *refuge* left to *salve* the *origin* of things by a *concourse* of *Atoms*, is yet as *precarious* and without *reason* as any other *supposition* of theirs whatsoever. *Tully* chargeth this *motion* of *declination* with two great *faults*, *futility*, and *inefficacy*, *quæ cum res tota ficta sit pueriliter, tum ne efficit quidem quod vult.* It is a *childish fancy* and to *no purpose*: For, *first*, It is asserted without any *reason* at all given for it, which is unworthy a *Philosopher*; neither is to *any purpose*; for if all *Atoms*, saith he, *decline* in their *motion*, then none of them will *stick* together; if some *decline*, and others *do not*, this is as *precarious* as any thing can be imagined, to assign a *diversity* of *motion* in *indivisible particles*, which yet have all the same *velocity* of *motion*; and, as *Tully* saith, *Hoc erit quasi provincias atomis dare, quæ recte, quæ oblique ferantur*; as though *Epicurus* were the General at this *Rendezvouz* of *Atoms*, who stands ready to appoint every *one* his *task* and *motion*. This *Plutarch* tells us was the great charge against *Epicurus*, ὡς ἀναίτιον εἰσαγόντι κίνησιν ἐν τῷ μὴ ὄντι, *because he introduced such a motion of declination out of nothing, upon no pretence of reason.* And *Turnebus* tells us that the ground why they desired so small a *declination*, was, because they were *conscious* to themselves, that it was founded upon no *ground* of *reason*; *Et Epicurei sibi conscii culpæ, timide eam ponebant, & minimam sibi postulabant.* To which purpose *Turnebus* cites those Verses of *Lucretius*,

De Fin. bon. & mal. lib. 1.

De Anima procreat. è Timæo. Turnebus in Ciceron. de Fato.

Quare etiam atque etiam paulum inclinare necesse est *Lib.* 2.
Corpora, nec plusquam minimum, ne fingere motus
Obliquos videamur, & id res vera refutet.
Namque hoc in promptu manifestumque esse videmus,

Ponder-

Pondera quantum in ſe eſt, non poſſe obliqua meare
E ſupero cum præcipitant, quod cernere poſſis.
Sed nihil omnino recta regione viai
Declinare quis eſt qui poſſit cernere ſeſe?

But this argument of *Lucretius* will hold if at all, further than this little *declination* (for it is no more they deſire than as little as may be imagined, *quo nihil poſſit fieri minus*, as *Tully* expreſſeth it) but if they may *decline* a little, why not a great *deal* more? nay, it is impoſſible to conceive, but a little *oblique motion* at firſt will in an *infinite ſpace* grow to be very *oblique*; for there is nothing to hinder the *motion* which *way* it bends: now if there be never ſo little *motion* of *declination*, the *Atom* will be inclined that *way*; and what then ſhould *hinder*, but that the *obliquity* in a *motion* through a great *ſpace* ſhould at laſt come to be very *great*; there being no *center* at all to guide the *motion* towards, and the *gravity* not hindring this *little declination*? Therefore *Tully* asks that queſtion, *Cur declinet uno minimo, non declinet duobus aut tribus?* Why only it declines *one minim*, and not *two or three*; *for*, ſaith he, *it is no impulſion from any other Atom which makes it decline that one minim*; *neither is there any impediment in the ſpace to hinder it from declining more*; *ſo that*, as he well ſaith, *optare hoc quidem eſt, non diſputare*, this is to *beg Hypotheſes*, and not to *prove* them, which is the thing we have proved *Epicurus* to doe Which was the firſt thing premiſed, *viz.* that this *Hypotheſis* of *Epicurus* was very *precarious*, and is built on no *foundation* of *reaſon*.

Lib. de Fato.

Sect. 17. 2. *It is unſatisfactory and inſufficient*, as well as *precarious*; for ſhould we grant his two main *principles*, *Atoms*, and his *Infinite empty ſpace*; yet we deny that ever his *Atoms* with all their *occurſions* would ever produce thoſe things which are in the *Univerſe*. To run through the noted *Phænomena* of the *Univerſe*, and to ſhew how inſufficient an *account* the *Epicureans* are able to give of them, from a *fortuitous concourſe* of *Atoms*, is a task too large to be here undertaken. There are only three things which I ſhall rather ſuggeſt, than *inſiſt* upon, to ſee what miſerable *ſhifts* the *Epicureans* are driven to for the *ſalving* of them, and ſhall then leave it with the *Reader* to judge, what unmeaſurable *confidence* it is in any to reject the *Creation* of the

World

World for the sake of the *Epicurean Hypothesis*; and whether it be not the height of *credulity*, as well as *infidelity*, to believe the *world* ever to have been made by a fortuitous *concourse* of *Atoms*.

1. The *great variety of appearances in nature*, which are attributed to *particles* of the same *nature*, only with the *alteration* of *size*, *shape* and *motion*. That some *things* in the world, should have no other reason given of them, may not only be tolerable, but rational, as in the *objects* and *operations* on the *organs* of *sense*, those *affections* which are mistaken for *real qualities*, &c. But that all those *effects* which are seen in *nature*, should have no other *cause* but the different *configuration* and *motion* of *Atoms*, is the height of *folly* as well as *impiety*. To *imagine* that the *particles* of *matter*, as they are in *men*, should be *capable* of *sensation*, *memory*, *intellection*, *volution*, &c. merely because of a different *shape*, *size* and *motion* from what they have in a *piece* of *wood*, is a riddle that requires a new *configuration* of *Atoms* in us to make us *understand*. May it not be hoped, that at least one time or other by this casual *concourse* of *Atoms*, the *particles* may light to be of such a *nature* in *stones*, as to make them fly; in *plants*, to make them all *sensitive*; and in *beasts* to make them *reason* and *discourse*? What may hinder such a *configuration* or *motion* of *particles*, if all these *effects* are to be imputed to no higher principle? We see in other *bodies* what different *appearances* are caused by a sudden *alteration* of the *particles* of the *matter* of which they are compounded; why may it not fall out so in the things mentioned? Neither can this be unreasonable to demand. 1. Because the *motion* of these *particles* of matter is *casual* still according to them; and who knows what *chance* may do? for the *seminal principles themselves* are, I suppose, according to them of the same *uniform matter* with the *rest* of the *world*, and so are liable to different *motion* and *configuration*. 2. Because all *particles* of *matter* are supposed to be in *continual motion*, because of that *disseminated Vacuity* which is presumed to be in the *world*, and because a *Coacervate Vacuity* is not only asserted as *possible*, but as *probably existent*: I assume only then (that which is insisted on as *probable*) *viz.* that that *space* which lies between our *Atmosphere* and the *Stars* is empty of any

other thing, but only the *rays* of the *Stars* which pass through it; I then supposing it a vacuity, whether would not the *particles* of those *bodies* which lie *contiguous* to that *space* presently *dislodge* from the *bodies* wherein they are, and begin a new *Rendezvouz* of *Atoms*, there? for all *Atoms* are supposed to be in *perpetual motion*; and the cause assigned, why in solid *bodies* they do not fly away, is because of the *repercussion* of other *Atoms*, that when they once begin to *stir*, they receive such *knocks* as make them *quiet* in their places. Now this cannot hold in the *bodies contiguous* to this *space*; for both those *bodies* are more *fluid*, and so there is no such *knocking* of *particles* to keep them at *rest*; but which is more, those which are *contiguous* have nothing at all to hinder them from *motion*, and so those *particles* will necessarily *remove* into that *empty space* where there is no *impediment* of their *motion*, and so the next *Atoms* to those must *remove*, because that *space* wherein the other were is made *empty* by their *removal*; and so the *next*, and so on, till not only the *air*, but the *whole mass* of the *earth* will on *supposition* of such a *vacuity* be dissolved into its first *particles*, which will all *mutiny* in the several *bodies* wherein they are, and never *rest* till they come to that *empty space*, where they may again *Rendezvouz* together. So dangerous is the news of *Liberty*, or of an *empty space* to these *Democratical particles* of the *Universe*. Neither can I see how a *disseminated vacuity* can *salve* the difficulty; for those *particles* of the most *solid bodies*, being in continual *motion*, and the *ground* of their *union* being *repercussion*, it thence follows that towards that *part* where the *disseminated vacuum* is, the *particles* meeting with no such *strokes* may fairly take their leaves of the *bodies* they are in, and so one succeed in the place of another, till the *configuration* of the whole be *altered*, and consequently different *appearances* and *effects* may be caused in the same bodies, though it results from *seminal principles*. So that according to the *Atomical principles*, no rational account can be given of those *effects* which are seen in nature. This *Dionysius* in *Eusebius* urgeth against the *Atomists*, that from the same *principles* without evident *reason* given for it, they make of the same *uniform matter* some things *conspicuous* to sense, others not, some *short-lived*, others *extreamly long-lived*. Τίνα ϑ τρόπον μιᾶς

Præp. Evang. l. 14. c. 24.

φωὰς ὕσης ἢ τ' ἀυτῆς ἀπαῶν ὑσίας, ἢ τ' ἀυτῆς ἀφθάρτυ φύσιως, πλὴν ἢ μεγάθῶν, ἀς φασι, ἢ ἢ σχημάτων, τὰ μὲν ὄζι θῶια ἢ ἀκήρατα ἢ ἀλάντα, ἀς αὐτὸς φήσειν ἂν, σώματα, ἢ μακραίωνά γε χζ' ἢ ὅσων ὁτιμδσυτα, φαυόμδνά τι ἢ ἀφανῆ; *What ground can there be assigned of so vast a difference between things if they all be of the same nature, and differ only in size and shape?* saith that excellent person, who there with a great deal of *eloquence* lays open the *folly* of the *Atomical Philosophy*, θαυμασὴ γὰ ἢ ἀτόμων, ἢ δημοκρατία λξιμδνων τε ἀλλήλας ἢ φίλων ἢ ἀσπαζομένων εἰς μίαν τε κατασκλιῶν συνοικίαν ἐπιχωρέντων. *It is a rare Democraty of Atoms, saith he, where the friendly Atoms meet and embrace each other, and from thence forward live in the closest society together.*

2. Not only the *variety*, but the *exact order and beauty of the world* is a thing *unaccountable* by the *Atomical hypothesis*. Were the whole *world* still a *Hesiod's Chaos* (from the consideration of which *Diogenes Laertius* tells us *Epicurus* began to *Philosophize*) we might probably believe an *agitation* of *particles* (supposing matter created might settle it in such a *confused manner*; but that there should be nothing else but a blind *impetus* of *Atoms* to produce those *vast* and most *regular motions* of the *heavenly bodies*, to order the *passage* of the *Sun* for so great *conveniency* of *nature*, and for the alternate *succession* of the *seasons* of the year, which should cut such *channels* for the *Ocean*, and keep that *vast body* of the *water* (whose *surface* is higher than the earth) from *overflowing* it, which should furnish the *earth* with such *seminal* and *prolifick principles*, as to provide *food* and *nourishment* for those *Animals* which live upon it, and furnish out every thing necessary for the *comfort* and *delight* of *mans* life; to *believe* I say, that all these *things* came only from a *blind* and *fortuitous concourse* of *Atoms*, is the most prodigious *piece* of *credulity* and *folly*, that *humane nature* is subject to. But this part which concerns the *order* and *beauty* of the *parts* of the *Universe*, and the argument thence, that it could be no *blind fortuitous* principle, but an *Infinitely wise God*, hath been so fully and judiciously handled by a *learned Person* already, that I shall rather choose to referr the Reader to his *discourse* than insist any more upon it.

Laert. l. 10.

D. H. *More Antid.* against Atheism, part 2.

3. *The production of mankind* is a thing which the *Atomiſts* are moſt ſhamefully puzzled with, as well as the *Formation* of the *internal parts* of mans *body*, of which I have already ſpoken in the precedent Chapter. It would pity one to ſee what lamentable *ſhifts* the *Atomiſts* are put to, to find out a way for the *production* of *mankind*, viz *That cur teeming mother the earth, at laſt caſt forth ſome kind of bags like wombs upon the ſurface of the earth, and theſe by degrees breaking, at laſt came out children, which were nouriſhed by a kind of juyce of the earth like milk, by which they were brought up till they came to be men.* Oh what will not *Atheiſts* believe rather than a *Deity* and *Providence!* But leſt we ſhould ſeem to wrong the *Atomiſts*, hear what *Cenſorinus* ſaith of *Epicurus*; *Is enim credidit limo calefactos uteros neſcio quos radicibus terræ cohærentes, primum increviſſe, & infantibus, ex ſe editis ingenitum lactis humorem, natura miniſtrante præbuiſſe; quos ita educatos & adultos, genus humanum propagaſſe.* But becauſe *Lucretius* may be thought to ſpeak more impartially in the caſe, how rarely doth he deſcribe it?

Cenſor. de die Nat. c. 2.

Creſcebant uteri terræ radicibus apti,
Quos ubi tempore maturo patefecerit ætas
Infantum, fugiens humorem, auraſque petiſſens,
Convertebat ibi natura foramina terræ,
Et ſuccum venis cogebat fundere apertis
Conſimilem lactis; ſicut nunc fœmina quæque
Quum peperit dulci repletur lacte, quod omnis
Impetus in mammas convertitur ille alimenti:
Terra cibum pueris, veſtem vapor, herba cubile
Præbebat, multa & molli lanugine abundans.

Had *Lucretius* been only a *Poet*, this might have paſſed for a handſomly deſcribed *Fable:* but to deliver it for a piece of *Philoſophy*, makes it the greater *Mythology:* that mans *body* was *formed* out of the earth we believe, becauſe we have *reaſon* ſo to do; but that the *earth* ſhould caſt forth ſuch *folliculi*, as he expreſſeth it, and that men ſhould be brought up in ſuch a way as he deſcribes, deſerves a place among the moſt *incredible* of *Poetick Fables*. But if *Poets* muſt be credited, how much more like a man did he ſpeak, who told us,

Natus

Natus homo est; sive hunc divino semine fecit
Ille opifex rerum, Mundi melioris origo;
Sive recens tellus, seductaque nuper ab alto
Æthere, cognati retinebat semina cœli;
Quam satus Iapeto mistam fluvialibus undis,
Finxit in effigiem moderantum cuncta Deorum.

Thus have we considered the *Epicurean Hypothesis*, both as to the *Principles* on which it stands, and the *suitableness* of it to the *Phænomena* of the *Universe*; and I suppose now there cannot be the least *shadow* of *reason* found from the *Atomical Philosophy* to make us at all *Question* that account of the *Origin* of the *Universe*, which ascribes it not to the *fortuitous concourse of Atoms*, but to the *Infinite wisdom* of a *Deity*. I conclude then this *discourse* of the *Epicurean Hypothesis* with the words of *Autemedon* in the *Greek Epigram*.

Ταῦτ' εἰδὼς, σοφὸς ἴσθι, μάτην δ' Ἐπίκυρον ἔασον
Πῶ τὸ κενὸν ζητεῖν, κ᾽ τίνες αἱ μονάδες.

Antholog. l. 1. c. 15.

Learn to be wise; let Epicurus *chase*
To find his Atoms, and his empty space.

I come now to the *last Hypothesis* mentioned, which undertakes to give an account of the *Origin* of the *Universe from the mere Mechanical Laws of motion and matter*. Which is the Hypothesis of the late famous French *Philosopher* M. *Des Cartes*. For although there be as much *reason* as *charity* to believe that he never intended his *Hypothesis* as a foundation of *Atheism*, having made it so much his business to assert the *existence* of a *Deity* and *immateriality* of the *soul*; yet because it is apt to be *abused* to that end by persons *Atheistically* disposed, because of his *ascribing* so much to the *power* of *matter*: we shall therefore so far consider it as it undertakes to give an account of the *Origin* of the *Universe* without a *Deity*. His *Hypothesis* therefore is briefly this. He takes it for granted, that all the *matter* of the *world* was at first of one *Uniform nature*, *divisible* into innumerable *parts*, and divided into many, which were all in *motion*: from hence he supposeth,

Sect. 18.

Princip. p. 3. *Art.* 46, &c.

ſuppoſeth, 1. *That all the matter of which the Univerſe is compoſed, was at firſt divided into equal particles of an indifferent ſize, and that they had all ſuch a motion as is now found in the world.* 2. *That all thoſe particles were not at firſt Sphærical, becauſe many ſuch little Globes joyned together will not fill up a continued ſpace, but that of whatever figure they were at firſt, they would by continued motion become ſphærical, becauſe they would have various circular motions; for ſeeing that at firſt they were moved with ſo great force that one particle would be disjoyned from the other, the ſame force continuing would ſerve to cut off all angles which are ſuppoſed in them, by their frequent occurſions againſt each other; and ſo when the angles were cut off, they would become ſphærical.* 3. *He ſuppoſeth that no ſpace is left empty, but when thoſe round particles being joyned, leave ſome intervals between them, there are ſome more ſubtile particles of matter, which are ready to fill up thoſe void ſpaces, which ariſe from thoſe angles which were cut off from the other particles to make them ſphærical; which fragments of particles are ſo little, and acquire thereby ſuch a celerity of motion, that by the force of that, they will be divided into innumerable little fragments, and ſo will fill up all thoſe ſpaces which other particles could not enter in at.* 4. *That thoſe particles which fill up the intervals between the ſphærical ones, have not all of them the ſame celerity of motion, becauſe ſome of them are more undivided than others are, which filled up the ſpace between three Globular particles when their angles were cut off, and therefore thoſe particles muſt neceſſarily have very angular figures, which are unfit for motion, and thence it comes to paſs that ſuch particles eaſily ſtick together, and transferr the greateſt part of their motion upon thoſe other particles which are leſs, and therefore have a ſwifter motion; and becauſe theſe particles are to paſs through ſuch triangular ſpaces which lie in the midſt of three Globular particles touching each other, therefore he ſuppoſeth them as to their breadth and depth to be of a triangular figure, but becauſe theſe particles are ſomewhat long; and the globular particles through which they paſs with ſo ſwift motion have their rotation about the poles of the Heavens, thence he ſuppoſes that thoſe triangular particles come to be wreathed.* Now from theſe things being thus ſuppoſed, *Des Cartes* hath ingenuouſly and conſonantly

consonantly to his *principles* undertaken to give an account of the most noted *Phænomena* of the *world*, and those three *sorts* of *particles* mentioned, he makes to be his three *elements*; the *first* is that *subtile matter* which was supposed to arise from the *cuttings* off the *angles* of the *greater particles*; and of this he tells us the *Sun* and *fixed Stars* consist, as those *particles* of that subtile matter being in continual *motion* have made those several *vortices* or *ætherеal whirlpools*. The *second element* consists of the *sphærical particles* themselves, which make up the *Heavens*; out of the *third element*, which are those *wreathed particles*, he gives an *account* of the *formation* of the *earth*, and *Planets*, and *Comets*; and from all of them by the help of those common *affections* of *matter*, *size*, *figure*, *motion*, &c. he undertakes to give an *account* of the *Phænomena* of the *world*. How far his *principles* do conduce to the giving mens minds satisfaction, as to the particular *Phænomena* of *nature*, is not here our *business* to enquire, but only how far these *principles* can give an account of the *Origin* of the *Universe* without a *Deity*? And that it cannot give a satisfactory *account* how the world was framed without a *Deity*, appears by the two *grand suppositions* on which all his *elements* depend, both which cannot be from any other *principle* but *God*. Those are, 1. *The existence of matter* in the world which we have already proved cannot be *independent* on *God*, and necessarily *existent*; and therefore supposing that matter *existent* and put into *motion*, would *grind* it self into those several *particles* by him supposed, yet this cannot give any account of the *Origin* of the *Universe* without a *Deity*. 2. *The motion of the particles of matter* supposeth a *Deity*; for *matter* is no *self-moving principle*, as hath been fully demonstrated in several places by that judicious *Philosopher*, Dr. *H. More*, who plainly manifests that if *motion* did necessarily belong to *matter*, it were impossible there should be *Sun*, or *Stars*, or *Earth*, or *Man* in the *World*; for the *matter* being *uniform*, it must have equal *motion* in all its *particles*, if *motion* doth belong to it. For *motion* being supposed to be *natural* and *essential* to *matter*, must be *alike* every where in it, and therefore every *particle* must be supposed in *motion* to its utmost *capacity*, and so every *particle* is *alike* and *moved alike*: and therefore there being no *prevalency* at all in

Antidote b. 2. ch. 1. Immortality of the soul. *b. 1. c. 11. s. 3.* &c. *Ep. 3. ad Cartes. p. 88.*

in any one *particle* above another in *bigneſs* or *motion*, it is manifeſt that this *univerſal matter*, to whom *motion* is ſo *eſſential* and *natural*, will be *ineffectual* for the producing of any *variety* of *appearances* in *nature*; for nothing could be *cauſed* by this *thin* and *ſubtile matter*, but what would be wholly *imperceptible* to any of our *ſenſes*: and what a ſtrange kind of *viſible world* would this be? From hence then it *appears* that there muſt be an infinitely *powerful* and *wiſe God*, who muſt both put *matter* into *motion*, and *regulate* the *motion* of it, in order to the producing all thoſe *varieties* which appear in the World. And this *neceſſity* of the *motion* of *matter* by a *power* given it from *God* is freely aeknowledged by Mr. *Des Cartes* himſelf in theſe words; *Conſidero materiam ſibi libere permiſſam, & nullum aliunde impulſum ſuſcipientem, ut plane quieſcentem; illa autem impellitur à Deo, tantundem motus ſive tranſlationis in ea conſervante quantum ab initio poſuit.* So that this great improver and diſcoverer of the *Mechanical power* of *matter*, doth freely confeſs the neceſſity not only of *God*'s giving *motion* in order to the *Origin* of the *Univerſe*, but of his conſerving *motion* in it for the *upholding* it: So that we need not fear from this *Hypotheſis* the *excluding* of a *Deity* from being the prime *efficient cauſe* of the world. All the queſtion then is concerning the particular *manner*, which was uſed by *God* as the *efficient cauſe* in giving being to the world. As to which I ſhall only in general ſuggeſt what *Maimonides* ſays of it. *Omnia ſimul creata erant, & poſtea ſucceſſive ab invicem ſeparata*; altho' I am ſomewhat inclinable to that of *Gaſſendus*, *majus eſt mundus opus, quam ut aſſequi mens humana illius molitionem poſſit*: To which I think may be well applyed that ſpeech of *Solomon*; *Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the Sun: becauſe though a man labour to ſeek it out, yea further, though a wiſe man think to know it, yet ſhall he not be able to find it.*

Reſp. ad ep. 3. *H. Mori. p.* 104.

More Nevoch. l. 2. *c.* 30.

Phyſic. ſ. 1. *l.* 7. *c.* 6.

Eccl. 8. 17.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the Origin of Evil.

Of the Being of Providence. Epicurus *his arguments against it refuted. The necessity of the belief of Providence in order to Religion. Providence proved from a consideration of the nature of God and the things of the world. Of the Spirit of nature. The great objections against Providence propounded. The first concerns the Origin of evil. God cannot be the Author of sin if the Scriptures be true. The account which the Scriptures give of the fall of man, doth not charge God with man's fault. God's power to govern man by Laws, though he gives no particular reason of every positive Precept. The reason of God's creating man with freedom of will, largely shewed from* Simplicius; *and the true account of the Origin of evil. God's permitting the fall makes him not the Author of it. The account which the Scriptures give of the Origin of evil compared with that of Heathen Philosophers. The antiquity of the opinion of ascribing the Origin of evil to an evil principle. Of the judgment of the* Persians, Ægyptians, *and others, about it. Of Manichæism. The opinion of the ancient Greek Philosophers; of* Pythagoras, Plato, *the* Stoicks; *the Origin of evil not from the necessity of matter. The remainders of the history of the fall among the Heathens. Of the malignity of* Dæmons. *Providence vindicated as to the sufferings of the good, and impunity of bad men. An account of both from natural light, manifested by* Seneca, Plutarch, *and others.*

IT being now manifested not only that there is a *God*, but that the *world* had its *Being* from him; it thence follows by an easie and *rational Deduction*, that there is a particular *hand* of *Divine providence*, which upholds the *world* in its Being, and wisely disposeth all *events* in it. For it is a most *irrational* and *absurd* opinion to assert a *Deity* and deny *providence*: and in nothing did *Epicurus* more discover the *weakness* and *puerility* of his *judgment* than in this. Indeed, if *Epicurus* had no other design in asserting a *Deity*, than (as many ancient *Sect.* 1.

Philoſophers imagined) to avoid the *imputation* of direct *Atheiſm*; and yet to take away all *foundations* of *Religion*, he muſt needs be ſaid to *ſerve* his *Hypotheſis* well, though he did aſſert the *Being* of an *excellent nature* which he called *God*; while yet he made *him* ſit as it were with his *elbows folded* up in the *Heavens*, and taking no *cognizance* of humane actions. For he well knew, that if the *belief* of *Divine Providence* were once *rooted* out of men's minds, the thoughts of an *excellent Being* above the *Heavens*, would have no more awe or power upon the *hearts* and *lives* of men, than the telling men that there are *Jewels* of ineſtimable *value* in the *Indies*, makes them more ready to pay *taxes* to their *Princes*. For that *Philoſopher* could not be ignorant, that it is not *worth* but *power*, nor *ſpeculation* but *intereſt* that rules the *world*. The poor *Tenant* more regards his petty *Landlord*, than the greateſt *Prince* in the *world* that hath nothing to *doe* with him; and he thinks he hath great reaſon for it; for he neither *fears puniſhment* nor *hopes* for *reward* from him; whereas his *Landlord* may diſpoſſeſs him of all he hath upon *diſpleaſure*, and may advantage him the moſt if he gains his *favour*: Suppoſing then that there were ſuch an *excellent Being* in the *world* which was compleatly happy in himſelf, and thought it an impairing of his *happineſs* to trouble himſelf with an *inſpection* of the *world*; *Religion* might then be indeed derived *à relegendo*, but not *à religando*; there might be ſome *pleaſure* in contemplating his nature, but there could be no *obligation* to *obedience*. So that *Epicurus* was the firſt *founder* of a *kind* of *Philoſophical Antinomianiſm*, placing all *Religion* in a *veneration* of the *Deity* purely for its own *excellency* without any ſuch *mercenary eye* (as thoſe who ſerve *God* for their own ends, as they ſay, are apt to have) to reward and puniſhment. And I much doubt that *good woman* whom the *ſtory* goes of, who in an *Enthuſiaſtick poſture* ran up and down the *ſtreets* with *emblems* in her *hands*, *fire* in the *one*, as ſhe ſaid, to *burn* up *Heaven*, and *water* in the other, to *quench Hell*, that men might ſerve *God* purely for himſelf, would, if ſhe had compaſſed her deſign, ſoon have brought *Proſelytes* enough to *Epicurus*, and by *burning Heaven* would have *burnt* up the *cords* of *Religion*, and in *quenching Hell* would have *extinguiſhed* the *awe* and *fear* of a *Deity* in the *world*. Indeed the incomparable

excellency

excellency and *perfection* which is in the *Divine Nature*, to *spirits* advanced to a *noble* and *generous height* in *Religion*, makes them exceedingly *value* their *choice*; while they *disregard* whatever *rivals* with *God* for it; but were it not for those *Magnetical hooks* of *obedience* and *eternal interest*, there are few would be *drawn* to a due *consideration* of, much less a *delight* in so *amiable* and *excellent* a *nature*. And it is impossible to conceive, why *God* in the *revelation* of his Will should ever so much as *mention* a future punishment, or *promise* an eternal reward, were not the *consideration* of these things the *sinews* of *Religion*.

Which they whose design was to undermine the very *foundations* on which all *Religion* was built, understood far better, than those *weak* pretended *advancers* of *Religion*, who while in such a way they *pretend* to *advance* it, do only *blow it up*. For if men ought not to have an *eye* and *respect* to their own *future condition*, nor serve *God* on the account of his *power* to make our souls *miserable* or *happy*, much less ought men to serve *God* with any regard to his *Providence*, since the *matters* which *Providence* is employed about in this *world*, are of *infinitely* less *moment*, than those which *concern* our *future state*. And if we are to have no *eye* on *Divine providence* in the *exercise* of *Religion*, we shall scarce be able to *understand* for what *end God* should take so much care of *mankind*, and manifest so much of his *goodness* to them, were it not to *quicken* them in their *search* after him, and excite them to the more chearfull *obedience* to him. And when once we question to what end *God* troubles himself with the world, we are come next door to *Epicurus*, and may in few *steps* more delight in the *flowers* of his *Garden*. For this was his strongest *plea* against *Providence*, that it was beneath the *Majesty* and *Excellency* of the *Divine nature* to stoop so low, and trouble himself so far, as to regard what was done on earth. This being one of his *Ratæ Sententiæ*, or *Undoubted Maxims*, Τὸ μακάριον καὶ ἄφθαρτον οὔτε αὐτὸ πράγματα ἔχει, οὔτε ἄλλῳ παρέχει, *The blessed and immortal Being, neither hath any imployment himself, nor troubles himself with others*. Which as *Maximus Tyrius* well observes, is rather a *description* of a *Sardanapalus*, than a *Deity*; nay, of a worse than a *Sardanapalus*; for he in the midst of all his *softness* and *effeminacy* would yet entertain some counsels for the *safety* and *good*

Sect. 2.

Diog. Laert. l. 10.

Dissert. 29.

of his *Empire*; but *Epicurus* his *Deity* is of so *tender* a nature, that the least thought of *business* would quite *spoil* his *happiness*. This opinion of *Epicurus* made the more *raised-spirited Moralists* so far contemn the unworthy *apprehensions* which he entertained of the *Divine nature*, that they *degraded* him from the very *title* of a *Philosopher* in it, and ranked him beneath the most *fabulous Poets*, who had writ such unworthy things of their *Gods*, as is evident by the censures which *Tully*, *Plutarch*, and others, pass upon him for this very opinion. And they tell him that some of their own *men* were of a more *noble* and *excellent spirit* than *Epicurus* his *Deity*, who abhorred *softness* and *idleness*, and made it their greatest *delight* to *do good* to their Countries. But *Epicurus* must needs make his *God* of his own humour (the usual *flattery* which men bear to themselves, to think that most *excellent* which they delight in most) as *Xenophanes* was wont to say of his *horse*, if he were to describe a *God*, it would be with a *curled main*, a *broad chest*, &c. and in every thing like himself. Had *Epicurus* himself so little of an *Athenian* in him, as not to make it some part of his *delight* to understand the *affairs* of the *world*? or at least, did he take no *pleasure* in the *walks* of his famous *garden*, nor to order his *trees*, and set his *flowers*, and contrive every thing for his own *delight*? Would *Epicurus* then count this a part of his *happiness*? and is it *inconsistent* with the *happiness* of the *Deity* to take notice of the *world* and order all things in it for his own *glory*? Must so excellent a *nature* as *God's* was, by his own acknowledgment, be presently *tired* with *business*, when the more *excellent* any *nature* is, the more *active* and *vigorous* it is, the more *able* to *comprehend* and *dispatch* matters of moment with the least *disturbance* to its self? Is it *pleasure* to a *Nurse* to fill the *child* with her *milk*? doth the *Sun* rejoice to *help* the *world* with his *constant light*? and doth a *Fountain murmur* till it be *delivered* of its *streams* which may *refresh* the ground? and is it no *delight* to the *Divine nature* to behold the *effects* of his *goodness* upon the *world*? We see here then the *foundation* on which *Epicurus* went, *viz.* that his *God* must be like *himself*, or there must be *none*; and truly he might more suitably to his principles question his *existence*, than supposing his *existence* deny his *Providence* on such *miserable* accounts as these are, which yet are the chief which either

Tully de Finib. l. 1. De Nat. Deor. lib 2. Plutarch. adversus Colot.

either *Epicurus* or *Lucretius* could bring against it, from the consideration of the *Divine nature.*

The which to any one who considers it, doth necessarily *infer* a peculiar *eye* and *hand* of *Providence* in the *world.* For can we imagine that a *Being* of *Infinite knowledge* should be *ignorant* of what is *done* in the *world?* and of *Infinite power*, should *stand by* and leave things to *chance* and *fortune?* which were at first *contrived* and brought into *Being* by the *contrivance* of his *Wisdom*, and *exercise* of his *Power.* And where the *foundation* of *existence* lies wholly and solely in the power of an *Infinite Being producing*, the ground of *continuance* of that *existence* must lie in the same power *conserving.* When men indeed *effect* any thing, the *work* may continue, whatever become of him that did it; but the *reason* of that is, because what man doth, is out of *matter* already *existent*, and his *work* is only setting *materials* together; but now what *God* effects, he absolutely gives a *Being* to, and therefore its *duration* depends on his *conservation. What is once in its Being.* I grant, *will continue till some greater force than its self put it out of Being*; but withall I add, that *God's withdrawing his Conservation* is so great a *force*, as must needs put that *Being* which had its *existence* from his *power*, out of the *condition* it was in by it. The *Light* of the *Sun* continues in the *air*, and as long as the *Sun* communicates it, nothing can extinguish the *light*, but what will put out the *Sun:* but could we suppose the *Sun to withdraw his beams*, what becomes of the *light* then? This is the case of all *Beings*, which come from an *Infinite power*; their *subsistence* depends on a continual *emanation* of the same *power* which gave them *Being:* and when once this is withdrawn, all those *Beings* which were produced by this *power* must needs *relapse* into nothing. Besides, what *dependence* is there upon each other in the *moments* of the *duration* of any created *Being?* The *mode* of *existence* in a *creature* is but *contingent* and *possible*, and nothing is implied in the *notion* of an *existent creature*, beyond mere *possibility* of *existence:* what is it then which gives *actual existence* to it? that cannot be *its self:* for it would be *necessarily existent:* if another then gives *existence*, this *existence* must wholly depend upon *him* who gave it: for nothing can continue *existence* to its self, but what may give it to its self, (for it *gives* it for the

Sect. 3.

the *moment* it continues it) and what gives *existence* to its *self*, must *necessarily exist*, which is repugnant to the very *notion* of a *created Being*: So that either we must deny a *possibility* of *non-existence*, or *annihilation* in a *creature*, which follows upon *necessity* of *existence*, or else we must *assert* that the *duration* or *continuance* of a *creature* in its *Being* doth immediately depend on *Divine Providence* and *Conservation*, which is with as much reason as frequency said to be a *continued Creation*. But yet further: was an *Infinite Wisdom* and *Power* necessary to put *things* into that *order* they are in? and is not the same necessary for the *governing* of them? I cannot see any reason to think that the power of *matter* when set in *motion*, should either bring things into that exquisite *order* and *dependence* which the *parts* of the *world* have upon each other: much less that by the mere *force* of that first *motion* all things should continue in the *state* they are in. *Perpetual motion* is yet one of the *desiderata* of the *world*: the most exquisite *Mechanism* cannot put an *engine* beyond the *necessity* of being looked after: can we then think this *dull*, *unactive matter*, merely by the *force* of its first *motion* should be able still to produce the *effects* which are seen in the *world*, and to keep it from *tumbling*, at least by degrees, into its pristine *Chaos*? It was an *Infinite Power*, I grant, which gave that first *motion*; but that it gave *power* to *continue* that *motion* till the *Conflagration* of the *world*, remains yet to be proved. Some therefore finding that in the present *state* of the *world*, *matter* will not *serve* for all the noted and common *Phænomena* of the *world*, have called in the help of a *Spirit* of *Nature*, which may serve instead of a *Man-midwife* to *matter*, to help her in her production of things. Or, as though *God* had a *plurality* of *worlds* to look after, they have taken care to substitute him a *Vicar* in this, which is the *Spirit* of *Nature*. But we had rather believe *God* himself to be perpetually *resident* in the world, and that the Power which gives *life*, and *being*, and *motion* to every thing in the world, is nothing else but his own *providence*; especially since we have learnt from himself, that it is *in him we live and move and have our being*.

Acts 17. 28.

Sect. 4. Thus then we see a necessity of asserting *Divine Providence* whether we consider the *Divine Nature*, or the *Phænomena* of the *world*; but yet the case is not so clear but there are

are two *grand objections* behind, which have been the continual exercise of the *wits* of *inquisitive* men almost in all Ages of the world. The one concerns the first *origin* of *evil*; the other concerns the *dispensations* of *providence*, whence it comes to pass that good men fare so hard in the world, when the bad triumph and flourish; if these *two* can be cleared with any *satisfaction* to *reason*, it will be the highest *vindication* of *Divine Providence*, and a great evidence of the *Divinity* of the *Scriptures*, which gives us such clear light and direction in these profound *speculations*, which the dim reason of man was so much to seek in.

I begin with the *origin* of *evil*; for, *if there be a hand of providence which orders all things in the world, how comes evil then into it, without God's being the Author of it?* Which is a speculation of as great *depth* as *necessity*, it highly concerning us to entertain the highest *apprehensions* of *God's holiness*, and how far he is from being the *author* of *sin*; and it is likewise a matter of some *difficulty* so to explain the *origin* of *evil* as to make it appear that *God* is not the *author* of it. I easily then assent to what *Origen* saith on this subject, when *Celsus* upon some mistaken places of *Scripture*, had charged the Scripture with laying the *origin* of evil upon God; εἰπερ ἔν ἀλλῳ τινὶ τόπῳ περὶ ἐν ἀνθρώποις ὑξετάσεως νόμῳ, συζητητέον ἐστὶ τῇ φύσει ἡμῶν, ἐν τίνοις καὶ ἢ πῶς κακὸν παρεῖναι ἂν φήμεν. *If any thing which calls for our enquiry be of difficult investigation, that which concerns the origin of evils is such a thing*; and as *Simplicius* well begins his *discourse* on this *subject*; περὶ δὲ ὑποστάσεως πῶς κακῶν ὁ λόγος μὴ καλῶς διορισθεὶς, καὶ τὸ περὶ τὸ θεῖον ἀσεβείας αἴτιος γέγονε, καὶ τὰ πῶς ἤθων εὐαγωγίας τὰς ἀρχὰς διέφθειρε, καὶ πολλαῖς καὶ ἀλύτοις ἀπορίαις ἐνέβαλε τοὺς μὴ καλῶς αἰτιολογοῦντας αὐτῶ. *The dispute concerning the nature and origin of evil, not being well stated, is the cause of great impiety towards God, and perverts the principles of good life, and involves them in innumerable perplexities who are not able to give a rational account of it.* So much then is it our great concernment to fix on sure *grounds* in the *resolution* of this important question; in which I intend not to lanch out into the *depth* and *intricacies* of it, as it relates to any *internal purposes* of *God's* will, (which is beyond our present scope) but I shall only take that account of it which the *Scripture* plainly gives in relating.

Orig. c. Celf. l. 4. p. 207.

Comment. in Epictet. c. 34.

ting the *fall* of the *first man*. For the clearing of which I shall proceed in this method:

1. *That if the Scriptures be true, God cannot be the Author of sin.*

2. *That the account which the Scripture gives of the origin of evil, doth not charge it upon God.*

3 *That no account given by Philosophers of the origin of evil, is so clear and rational as this is.*

4 *That the most material circumstances of this account are attested by the Heathens themselves.*

1. *That if the Scriptures be true, God cannot be the author of sin.* For if the *Scriptures* be true, we are bound without *hesitation* to yield our *assent* to them in their *plain* and direct *affirmations*, and there can be no *ground* of suspending *assent*, as to any thing which pretends to be a *Divine Truth*, but the want of certain *evidence*, whether it be of *Divine Revelation* or no. No doubt it would be one of the most effectual *ways* to put an end to the numerous *controversies* of the *Christian world* (especially to those *bold disputes* concerning the *method* and *order* of *God*'s decrees) if the plain and undoubted *assertions* of *Scripture* were made the *Rule* and *Standard*, whereby we ought to *judge* of such *things* as are more *obscure* and *ambiguous*. And could men but rest contented with those *things* which concern their eternal *happiness*. and the *means* in order to it (which on that account are written with all imaginable *perspicuity* in *Scripture*) and the *moment* of all other *controversies* be judged by their reference to these, there would be fewer *controversies* and more *Christians* in the world. Now there are two grand *principles* which concern men's *eternal* condition, of which we have the greatest *certainty* from Scripture, and on which we may with safety *rely*, without perplexing our minds about those more nice and subtile *speculations* (which it may be are uncapable of all full and particular resolution) and those are, *That the ruin and destruction of man is wholly from himself*; and, *That his salvation is from God alone*. If then man's *ruin* and *misery* be from *himself*; which the *Scripture* doth so much inculcate on all occasions; then without *controversie* that which is the *cause* of all the *misery* of humane *nature*, is wholly from himself too, which is, *sin*. So that if the main *scope* and *design* of the *Scripture* be true, *God* cannot be

be the Author of *that*, by which (without the intervention of the mercy of *God*) man's misery *unavoidably* falls upon him. For with what *Authority* and *Majesty* doth *God* in the *Scripture forbid* all manner of sin? with what *earnestness* and *importunity* doth he *woo* the sinner to forsake his sin? with what *loathing* and *detestation* doth he *mention* sin? with what *justice* and *severity* doth he *punish* sin? with what *wrath* and *indignation* doth he *threaten* contumacious sinners? And is it possible, (after all this and much more, recorded in the *Scriptures*, to express the *holiness* of *God's nature*, his *hatred* of *sin*, and his *appointing* a *day* of *judgment* for the solemn punishment of sinners) to imagine that the *Scriptures* do in the least ascribe the *Origin* of *evil* to *God*, or make him the *Author* of *Sin*? *Shall not the judge of all the world do right*? will a *God* of *Infinite Justice*, *Purity*, and *Holiness*, punish the *sinner* for that which himself was the *cause* of? Far be such unworthy thoughts from our *apprehensions* of a *Deity*, much more of that *God* whom we believe to have declared his mind so much to the contrary, that we cannot believe *that* and the *Scriptures* to be *true* together.

Taking it then for granted in the *general*, that *God* cannot be the *Author* of *sin*, we come to *enquire*, *whether the account which the Scripture gives of the Origin of evil*, *doth any way charge it upon God*? There are only two *ways*, according to the *history* of the *fall* of *man recorded* in *Scripture*, whereby men may have any *ground* to *question* whether *God* were the *cause* of *man's fall*; either *first*, by the *giving* him that *positive Law*, which was the *occasion* of his fall; or *secondly*, by *leaving him to the liberty of his own will*. *First*, *The giving of that positive Law cannot be the least ground of laying man's fault on God*; because, 1. *It was most suitable to the nature of a rational creature to be governed by Laws*, or declarations of the Will of his Maker. For considering *man* as a *free agent*, there can be no way imagined so *consonant* to the *nature* of *man* as this was, because thereby he might *declare* his obedience to *God* to be the *matter* of his *free choice*. For where there is a *capacity* of *reward*, and *punishment*, and *acting* in the *consideration* of them, there must be a declaration of the will of the Law-giver, according to which man may expect either his *reward* or *punishment*. If it were *suitable*

Sect. 5. 2.

table to *God's* nature to promiſe *life* to *man* upon *obedience*, it was not *unſuitable* to it to expect *obedience* to every *declaration* of his *will*; conſidering the *abſolute ſoveraignty* and *dominion* which *God* had over man as being his *creature*, and the indiſpenſible *obligation* which was in the *nature* of *man* to *obey* whatever his *Maker* did command him. So that *God* had *full* and *abſolute right* to require from man, what he did as to the *Law* which he gave him to obey; and in the general we cannot conceive, how there ſhould be a *teſtimony* of man's *obedience* towards his *Creator*, without ſome declaration of his Creator's Will. Secondly, *God had full power and authority, not only to govern man by Laws, but to determine man's general obligation to obedience to that particular poſitive precept by the breach of which man fell. If God's power* over man was *univerſal* and *unlimited*, what *reaſon* can there be to imagine it ſhould not extend to ſuch a *poſitive* Law? Was it, becauſe the *matter* of this *Law ſeemed too low for God to command his creature?* but whatever the *matter* of the *Law* was, *obedience* to *God* was the great *end* of it, which man had teſtified as much in that *Inſtance* of it as in any other whatſoever; and in the *violation* of it were implyed the higheſt *aggravations* of *diſobedience*; for *God's power* and *authority* was as much *contemned*, his *goodneſs ſlighted*, his *Truth* and *faithfulneſs queſtioned*, his *Name diſhoncured*, his *Majeſty affronted* in the breach of that, as of any other *Law* whatſoever it had been. If the *Law* were eaſie to be obſerved, the greater was the *ſin* of *diſobedience*; if the *weight* of the *matter* was not ſo *great* in its ſelf, yet *God's authority* added the *greateſt weight* to it; and the *ground* of *obedience* is not to be fetched from the *nature* of the *thing* required, but from the *authority* of the *Legiſlator*. Or was it then becauſe *God* concealed from *man* his *counſel* in giving of that *poſitive precept?* Hath not then a *Legiſlator* power to require any *thing*, but what he *ſatisfies* every one of his *reaſon* in commanding it? if ſo, what becomes of *obedience* and *ſubjection?* it will be impoſſible to make any *probative precepts* on this account; and the *Legiſlator* muſt be charged with the *diſobedience* of his *ſubjects*, where he doth not give a particular *account* of every thing which he requires; which as it concerns *humane Legiſlators* (who have not that abſolute power and authority which *God* hath)

hath) is contrary to all *Laws* of *Policy* and the general sense of the world. This *Plutarch* gives a good account of, when he discourseth so *rationally* of the *sobriety* which men ought to use in their inquiries into the *grounds* and *reasons* of *God's actions*; *for*, saith he, *Physicians will give prescriptions without giving the Patient a particular reason of every circumstance in them*: οὐδὲ γὰρ ὅσοι ἄνθρωποι νόμους τιθέασι, τὸ ἔυλογον ἀπλῶς ἅπασιν ἢ πάντων φανερὸν ἔστιν, ἀλλ' εἴ τι καὶ πρὸς τῶν γελοῖα δοκεῖ προσταγμάτων *Neither have humane Laws always apparent reason for them, nay some of them, are to appearance ridiculous*; for which he instanceth in that *Law* of the *Lacedæmonian Ephori*, μὴ τρίφειν μύσακα, to which no other reason was annexed but this, ἵνα πιθηται τοῖς νόμοις ὡς μὴ χαλεποὶ δοκοῖεν αὐτοῖς: *they commanded every Magistrate at the entrance of his office to shave himself, and gave this reason for it, that they might learn to obey Laws themselves.* He further instanceth, in the *Roman* custom of *manumission*, their *Laws* about *testaments*, *Solon's Law* against *neutrality* in seditions, and concludes thence, ἵνα ὅλως πολλὰς ἂν τις ἐξείποι νόμων ἀτοπίας, μήτε τὸν λόγον ἔχων τῷ νομοθέτῃ, μήτε τὴν αἰτίαν συνιεὶς ἑκάστου τῶν γραφομένων. *Any one would easily find many absurdities in Laws, who doth not consider the intention of the Legislator, or the ground of what he requires.* Τί δὲ θαυμαστὸν, saith he, εἰ τὰ ἀνθρώπων ἔργα ἡμῖν ὄντων δυσεφίκτων, οὐκ ἔυτοροῦν ὅτι τὸ περὶ τῶν θεῶν εἰπεῖν, ᾧ τινι λόγῳ τὰς μὲν ὕστερον, τὰς δὲ πρότερον τῶν ἁμαρτανθέντων κολάζουσιν. *What wonder is it if we are so puzzled to give an account of the actions of men, that we should be to seek as to those of the Deity?* This cannot be then any ground on the account of mere reason, to lay the *charge* of *man's disobedience* upon *God*, because he required from him the observance of that *positive command* of not eating of the *forbidden fruit*.

De his qui sero puniuntur à numine.

The only thing then left, is, *whether God be not liable to this charge as he left man to the liberty of his will*: And that may be grounded on two things; *either that God did not create man in such a condition, in which it had been impossible for him to have sinned*; *or that knowing his temptation he did not give him power to resist it.* If neither of these will lay any *Imputation* of the *Origin* of *evil* upon *God*, then *God will* appear to be wholly *free* from it. *First*, concerning *man's being created a free agent*; if the *determination* of the *Schools* be good, that *possibility* of *sinning* is implied in the very *notion* of a

Sect. 6.

Vid. Thom. 1. p. q. 63. art. 1. Eſtium in ſentent. l. 2. diſt. 7. ſect. 9.

creature; and conſequently that *impeccability* is *repugnant* to the *nature* of a *created Being*; then we ſee a neceſſary *reaſon*, why man was created in a *ſtate* of *liberty*: but endeavouring to ſhew that the grounds of our *Religion* are not *repugnant* to natural *reaſon*, I ſhall rather make *uſe* of the *Teſtimony* of ſuch who profeſſed to be *followers* of nothing elſe but *reaſon* and *Philoſophy*. Among whom I ſhall make choice of *Simplicius* both for the reaſon he produceth, and becauſe he is fartheſt from any *ſuſpicion* of *partiality*, by reaſon of his known *oppoſition* to the *Moſaick Hiſtory* of the *Creation*. He then in his *Commentaries* on *Epictetus* profeſſedly diſputes this very ſubject of the *Origin* of *evil*, and after having rejected that fond opinion of two *principles*, one of *good*, and the *other* of *evil*, undertakes to give an account whence *evil* came into the *world*, which becauſe it tends ſo much to the *illuſtrating* our preſent ſubject, I ſhall give an account of. *God*, ſaith he, *who is the fountain and principle of all good, not only produced things which were in themſelves good, nor only thoſe things which were of a middle nature, but the extreams too, which were ſuch things as were apt to be perverted from that which is according to nature, to that which we call evil. And that after thoſe bodies which were* (as he ſuppoſeth) *incorruptible*, others *were produced which are ſubject to mutation and corruption; and ſo after thoſe ſouls which were immutably fixed in good, others were produced which were liable to be perverted from it; that ſo the riches of God's goodneſs might be diſplayed in making to exiſt all beings which are capable of it; and that the Univerſe might be perfect in having all ſorts of Beings in it. Now*, he ſuppoſeth, *that all thoſe Beings which are above this ſublunary world are ſuch as are immutably good, and that the loweſt ſort of Beings which are liable to be perverted to evil, are ſuch which are here below. Therefore*, ſaith he, *the ſoul being of a more noble and immutable nature, while it is by its ſelf, doth not partake of evil; but it being of a nature apt to be joyned with theſe terreſtrial bodies (by the providence of the author of the Univerſe, who produced ſuch ſouls, that ſo both extreams might be joyned by the bonds of vital union) thereby it becomes ſenſible of thoſe evils and pains which the body is ſubject to; but theſe things are not properly evils but rather good, conſidering our terreſtrial bodies as parts of the Univerſe which is upheld by the changes and viciſſitudes*

Com. in Epict. cap. 34. p. 175.

ciſſitudes which are in this lower world: Which he largely diſcourſes on to ſhew that thoſe particular alterations which are in bodies, do conduce rather to the *perfection* and *beauty* of the *Univerſe*, than are any real *evils* in it. *But* now, ſaith he, *for the origin of thoſe things which are properly evils*, viz. *moral evils, which are* τὰ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνης ψυχῆς πλαίσματα, *the lapſes and errors of the humane ſoul, we are to conſider, that there are ſouls of a more excellent nature than ours are, which are immutably good; and the ſouls of brutes are of a lower kind than ours are, and yet are middle between the rational and vegetative, having ſomething in them parallel both to the appetites and evils which are in men, which will therefore be underſtood by an account of the other.* Ἡ δὲ ἀνθρωπίνη ψυχὴ, μέση πως γενηθεῖσα τῶν τε ἀεὶ ἄνω μενόντων ψυχῶν, διά τε τὴν ἐν τῇ ψυχικῇ οὐσίᾳ ἀκρότητα, καὶ διὰ τὴν τοῦ μιθέξιν, καὶ τῶν ἀεὶ κάτω διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸ σῶμα συγχύσεως τὸ ἀλόγως ζωῆς, καὶ σύνδεσμον ζωτικὸς γινομένη τῶν τε ἄνω καὶ τῶν κάτω, διὰ τὸ αὐτεξούσιόν πῃ, ποτὲ μὲν πρὸς ἐκεῖνα, ποτὲ δὲ πρὸς ταῦτα ὁμοιοῦται. *The ſoul of man is nexus utriuſq; mundi, in the middle between thoſe more excellent Beings which perpetually remain above, with which it partakes in the ſublimity of its nature and underſtanding, and thoſe inferior terreſtrial Beings with which it communicates through the vital union which it hath with the body, and by reaſon of that freedom and indifferency which it hath, it ſometimes is aſſimilated to the one, ſometimes to the other of theſe extreams. So that while it approacheth to the nature of the ſuperior Beings, it keeps it ſelf free from evil, but becauſe of its freedom it may ſometimes ſink down into theſe lower things*, and ſo he calls *the cauſe of all evil in the ſoul* τὴν αὐτοθελῆ κάθοδον εἰς τόνδε ὑγρὸν τόπον, *its voluntary deſcent into this lower world*, and immerſing it ſelf in the *fæculency* of *terreſtrial matter.* καὶ φύσιν δ' ἀμφίβολον ἔλαχεν, οὐκ ἀναγκαζομένην κρατεῖσθαι ἢ ἄνεσιν, ἀλλ' ὅπως ὁρμήσῃ, ὡς ὅταν αὐτὴ θέλῃ κατίναι τε καὶ ἀνίναι. *For though the ſoul be of a kind of Amphibious nature, yet it is not forced either upwards or downwards, but acts either way according to its internal liberty. But*, ſaith he, *while the rational ſoul keeps that power which it hath in its hands over the body, and makes uſe of it only as an inſtrument for its own good, ſo long it keeps pure and free from any ſtain of evil; but when it once forgets the ſimilitude it hath with the more excellent Being,* Pag. 180. ed. Salmaſii.

and

and throws away the Scepter of its power, and drowns it ſelf in the body and brutiſh affections (preferring the pleaſure of ſenſe above that of reaſon) when it ſo far degenerates below the principles of reaſon, that inſtead of commanding the brutiſh faculties it becomes a ſlave to them, then it conceives and brings forth evil; but this it doth not through any co-action or neceſſity, but through the abuſe of that power and liberty which it hath: For the choice is a proper action of the ſoul it ſelf; which he proves from hence, becauſe God and the Laws, and all good men, do not meaſure the good and evil of actions ſo much by the event, as by the will and intention of the perſon; and that puniſhment and reward have chiefly a reſpect to thoſe. And therefore men are pardoned for what they do out of conſtraint and force, and the fault is aſcribed, ὐ τῷ πεπονθότι ἀλλὰ βιαζομένῳ, *not to him that did it, but to him that forced him to the doing of it.* And ſo from hence he concludes, *that becauſe of the freedom of the will of man, nothing elſe can be ſaid to be the author of evil properly; but the ſoul of man*; and concludes that *diſcourſe* with this *excellent ſpeech,* Ἐγκείσθω ὖν τῳ αἰτίαν τῶ κακῶ, κεκραγὼς τε φωνῆ βοάτω, ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς κακῶν ἀναίτιος, ἀλλότι τὸ κακὸν ἡ ψυχὴ ἐκοῦσα αὐτεξουσίως, καὶ ὐκ ὁ Θεὸς· εἰ μὲν γὰρ βίᾳ τὸ κακὸν ἔπραττεν ἡ ψυχὴ, τάχα ἄν τις τὸν Θεὸν ἠτιάσατο τὴν ἀναιτίως αὐτῷ συγχωρήσαντα βιασθῆναι, καίτοι γε κακὸν ἦν τὸ βίᾳ πραττόμενον· κατὰ δὲ τὸ ἀληθέστατον αὐτὸ ἑαυτῷ μόνη ἄν αἰτία λέγοιτο δικαίως. *Having thus found out the true Origin of evil, let us cry out with a loud voice, that God is not the author of ſin, becauſe the ſoul freely doth that which is evil, and not God; for if the ſoul were forced to do what it doth, one might juſtly lay the blame, on God, who permits ſuch a force to be offered it, neither could it be properly evil which the ſoul was conſtrained to; but ſince it acted freely, out of choice, the ſoul muſt alone be accounted the author and cauſe of evil.* Thus we ſee that *God* cannot with any ſhadow of *reaſon* be accounted the *author* of *evil*, becauſe he gave the ſoul of man a principle of *internal freedom*, when the very *freedom* of *acting* which the ſoul had, put it into a *capacity* of *ſtanding* as well as *falling*. And certainly, he can never be ſaid to be the *cauſe* of the *breaking* of a *perſon*, who gave him a *ſtock* to ſet up with, and ſuppoſed him able to *manage* it when he gave it him; indeed had not man had this *freedom* of *will*, he could not have *fallen*; but then neither had

had he been a *rational Agent*, which ſuppoſing no *corruption*, doth ſpeak *freedom* of *action*. So that while we enquire after the *Origin* of *evil* we have no other *cauſe* to aſſign it to but man's *abuſe* of that *free* power of acting which he had; but if we will be ſo curious as to enquire further, why God did create man with ſuch a *freedom* of *will*, and not rather *fix* his ſoul immutably on *good*; if the *order* of *beings* be no ſatisfactory reaſon for it, we can give no other than that why he made *man*, or the *world* at all, which was the *good pleaſure* of his *Will*.

But ſecondly, *ſuppoſing God's giving man this freedom of will, doth not entitle him to be the author of evil*; doth not his *leaving* man to this *liberty* of his in the *temptation*, *make him the cauſe of ſin?* I anſwer no, and that on theſe accounts. Sect. 7.

1. *Becauſe man ſtood then upon ſuch terms, that he could not fall but by his own free and voluntary act*; he had a power to ſtand, in that there was no principle of *corruption* at all in his *faculties*, but he had a *pure* and *undefiled ſoul* which could not be *polluted* without its own *conſent*: Now it had been *repugnant* to the *terms* on which man ſtood (which were the tryal of his *obedience* to his Creator) had he been *irreſiſtibly determined* any way. *Simplicius* puts this queſtion after the former diſcourſe, *Whether God may not be called the author of ſin, becauſe he permits the ſoul to uſe her liberty? but*, ſaith he, *he that ſays God ſhould not have permitted this uſe of its freedom to the ſoul, muſt ſay one of theſe two things, either that the ſoul being of ſuch a nature as is indifferent to good or evil, it ſhould have been wholly kept from the chooſing evil, or elſe that it ſhould have been made of ſuch a nature that it ſhould not have had a power of chooſing evil. The firſt is irrational and abſurd; for what freedom and liberty had that been where there was no choice? and what choice could there have been where the mind was neceſſitated only to one part? For the ſecond we are to conſider*, ſaith he, *that no evil is in it ſelf deſirable, or to be choſen; but withal, if this power of determining it ſelf either way muſt be taken away, it muſt be either as ſomething not good, or as ſome great evil; and whoever ſaith ſo, doth not conſider, how many things in the world there are, which are accounted good and deſirable things, yet are no ways comparable with this freedom of Will.*

For

For it excells all ſublunary Beings; and there is none would rather deſire to be a Brute or Plant than man; if God then ſhewed his goodneſs in giving to inferior beings ſuch perfections which are far below this, is it any ways incongruous to God's nature and goodneſs to give man the freedom of his actions, and a ſelf determining power, though he permitted him the free uſe of it? Beſides, as that author reaſons, *had God to prevent man's ſin taken away the Liberty of his will, he had likewiſe deſtroyed the foundation of all vertue, and the very nature of man; for vertue would not have been ſuch, had there been no poſſibility of acting contrary; and man's nature would have been divine, becauſe impeccable. Therefore,* ſaith he, *though we attribute this ſelf-determining power to God as the Author of it, which was ſo neceſſary in the order of the Univerſe, we have no reaſon to attribute the Origin of that evil to God which comes by the abuſe of that liberty. For,* as he further adds, *God doth not at all cauſe that averſion from Good, which is in the ſoul when it ſins, but only gave ſuch a power to the ſoul, whereby it might turn it ſelf to evil, out of which God might afterwards produce ſo much good, which could not otherwiſe have been without it.* So conſonantly to the *Scripture* doth that *Philoſopher* ſpeak on this ſubject.

Pag. 186, 187.

2. *God cannot be ſaid to be the author of ſin, though he did not prevent the fall of man, becauſe he did not withdraw before his fall any grace or aſſiſtance, which was neceſſary for his ſtanding.* Had there been indeed a neceſſity of *ſupernatural grace* to be *communicated* to man for every *moment*, to continue him in his *Innocency*, and had *God* before mans *fall* withdrawn ſuch *aſſiſtance* from him, without which it were *impoſſible* for him to have ſtood, it would be very difficult freeing *God* from being the cauſe of the *Fall* of *man*. But we are not put to ſuch *difficulties* for *acquitting God* from being the *author* of *ſin*; for there appears no *neceſſity* at all for *aſſerting* any diſtinction of *ſufficient* and *efficacious grace* in man before his *Fall*; that the one ſhould belong only to a *radical power* of ſtanding, the other to every *act* of *good* which *Adam* did; For if *God made man upright*, he certainly gave him ſuch a *power* as might be brought into *act* without the *neceſſity* of any *ſupervenient act of grace*, to *elicite* that *habitual power* into particular *actions*. If the other were *ſufficient* it

it was *sufficient* for its *end*; and how could it be *sufficient* for its end, if notwithstanding that, there were no *possibility* of *standing*, unless *efficacious help* were superadded to it? *God* would not certainly require any thing from the *creature* in his *integrity*, but what he had a *power* to *obey*; and if there were *necessary* further *grace* to bring the *power* into act, then the *substracting* of this *grace* must be by way of *punishment* to man, which it is hard to conceive for what it should be, before *man* had sinned, or else *God* must *substract* this *grace* on *purpose* that *man* might *fall*, which would necessarily *follow* on this supposition, in which case *man* would be *necessitated* to *fall*, *veluti cum subductis columnis domus necessario corruit*, as one expresseth it, *as a house must needs fall when the pillars on which it stood are taken away from it.* But now if *God* withdrew not any *effectual grace* from man, whereby he must necessarily *fall*, then though *God* permit man to use his liberty, yet he cannot be any ways the *author* of *evil*, because *man* had still a *posse si vellet*, a power of standing, if he had made right *use* of his *Liberty*, and *God* never took from man his *adjutorium quo potuit stare*, *& sine quo non potuit*, as *Divines* call it, man enjoying still his *power*, though by the *abuse* of his *Liberty* he fell into *sin*; so that granting *God* to leave man to the *use* of his *Liberty*, yet we see *God* cannot in the least be charged with *being* the *Author* of *sin*, or of the *origin* of *evil*, by the *history* of the *fall* of *man* in *Scripture*: which was the thing to be cleared.

We come now in the *third* place to compare that account given of the *origin* of *evil* in *Scripture*, with that which was embraced by *Heathen Philosophers*, in point of reason and evidence. There was no one inquiry whatsoever in which those who had nothing but natural light to guide them, were more to seek for satisfaction in, than this concerning the *origin* of *evil*. They saw by continual experience how great a *Torrent* of both sorts of *evils*, of *sin* and *punishment*, did overflow the world; but they were like the *Ægyptians*, who had sufficient evidence of the overflowing their banks by the River *Nile*, but could not find out the *spring* or the head of it. The reason was, as *corruption* increased in the world, so the *means* of *instruction* and *knowledge* decayed; and so as the *Phænemena* grew greater, the *reason* of them was less understood; *Sect.* 8.

the knowledge of the Hiſtory of the firſt *Ages* of the world, through which they could alone come to the full underſtanding of the true cauſe of evil, inſenſibly decaying in the ſeveral Nations: Inſomuch that thoſe who are not at all acquainted with that Hiſtory of the world which was preſerved in *Sacred Records* among the *Jews*, had nothing but their own uncertain conjectures to go by, and ſome kind of obſcure *traditions* which were preſerved among them, which while they ſought to rectifie by their *interpretations*, they made them more *obſcure* and *falſe* than they found them. They were certain of nothing, but that mankind was in a low and degenerate condition, and ſubject to continual miſeries and calamities; they who cried up the moſt the *αὐτεξούσιον*, or the *ſelf-determining power* of the *ſoul*, could not certainly but ſtrangely wonder, that a *Principle* indifferent to be carried either way, ſhould be ſo almoſt *fatally* inclined to the worſt of them. It was very ſtrange that ſince *Reaſon* ought to have the command of *Paſſions* by their own acknowledgment, the *brutiſh* part of the ſoul ſhould ſo maſter and enſlave the *rational*, and the *beaſt* ſhould ſtill caſt the *rider* in man, the *ſenſitive appetite* ſhould throw off the power of the *τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν*, of that *faculty* of the ſoul which was deſigned for the *Government* of all the reſt. The *Philoſophers* could not be ignorant what *ſlaves* they were themſelves to this *terreſtrial Hyle*, how eaſily their moſt *mettleſome ſouls* were mired in the *dirt*, how deep they were *ſunk* into corporeal *pleaſures*, that it was paſt the power of their reaſon to help them out Nay, when the ſoul begins to be *fledged* again, after her *πτεροῤῥύησις*, or *moulting*, at her entrance into the body, which *Plato* ſpeaks of, and ſtrives to raiſe her ſelf *above* this lower world, ſhe then feels the *weight* of ſuch *Plummets* hanging at her feet, that they bring her down again to her former *fluttering* up and down in her *Cage* of earth. So *Hierocles* complains, that when *reaſon* begins to carry the ſoul to the perception of the moſt noble objects, the ſoul with a *generous flight* would ſoar above this world, *ὅταν μὴ ἡ παθητικαῖς ὁλκαῖς ὥσπερ ποσὶ μολύβδιναι, κατοφέρηται πρὸς κακίαν, were it not born down to that which is evil by the force of paſſions, which hang like leads upon the ſouls feet.* What a ſtrange unaccountable thing muſt this needs be to thoſe who beheld the conſtancy of the effect, but were to ſeek for the cauſe

Hieroc. in aurea carmina. p. 17.

cause of it? It could not but be clear to them that the αὐτεξούσιον they were wont to extoll so high, was (in the state man was now in) but a more noble name for slavery; when themselves could not but confess the ῥοπὴ, or inclination in the soul, was so strong to the evil; and could that be an *even balance*, where there was so much *down weight* in one of the *scales*? unless they made, as some of them did, the *voluntary inclinations* of the soul to *evil*, an evidence of her *liberty* in this most degenerate condition, as though it were any argument that the *prisoner* was the *freer*, because he *delighted* himself in the *noise* of his *shakles*. Neither was this disorder alone at home in the soul, where there was still a *Xantippe* scolding with *Socrates*, *passion* striving with *reason*; but when they looked abroad in the world, they could not but observe some strange irregularities in the *converse* among men. What *debaucheries*, *contentions*, *rapines*, *fightings* and *destroying* each other, and that with the greatest cruelty, and that frequently among *countrymen*, *friends*, nay *relations* and *kindreds*! and could this *hostility* between those of the same nature, and under the most sacred *bonds* of *union*, be the *result* of *nature*, when even *beasts* of *prey* are not such to those of their own *kind*? Besides all this, when they summed up the life of *man* together, and took an account of the *weaknesses* and *follies* of *childhood*, the *heats* and *extravagancies* of *youth*, the *passions*, *disquietments* and *disappointments* of men in their strength and height of business, the *inquietude*, *aches* and *infirmities* of old age, besides the *miseries* which through every one of these all men are subject to, and few escape, into how small a *sum* will the solid *pleasure* and *contentment* of the *life* of *man* be reduced? Nay, if we take those things in the world which men please themselves the most in enjoyment of, and consider but with what *care* they are *got*, with what *fear* they are *kept*, and with what *certainty* they must be *lost*; and how much the *possession* of any thing fails of the *expectation* of it, and how near men are upon the *top* of *Tenariff* to fall into the *depth* of the *Sea*; how often they are *precipitated* from the height of *prosperity*, into the *depth* of *adversity*, we shall find yet much less that by the greatest *Chymistrie* can be extracted of *real satisfaction* out of these things. Whence then should it come that men's *souls* should so delight to feed on these *husks*, and to embrace

theſe *clouds* and *ſhadows*, inſtead of that real *good* which is the true object of the ſoul's deſire? They could eaſily ſee there was no *pure*, unmixed *good* in the world, but there was a *contemperation* of both together, according to that of *Euripides*:

Οὐκ ἂν ἡδύ ſίο χωρὶς ἀθλιὰ καὶ κακῆ,
Ἀλλ' ἔſτι τις σύγκρασις.

There is a kind of continual mixture of good and evil in the world, which *Socrates* obſerved upon the rubbing of his thigh
Plat. in Phæd. where the fetters made it itch, ὡς ἄτοπον ὦ ἄνδρες, ἔοικέ τι εἶναι τοῦτο ὃ καλοῦσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἡδύ; ὡς θαυμασίως πέφυκε πρὸς τὸ δοκεῖν ἐναντίον εἶναι, τὸ λυπηρόν; *What a ſtrange thing is that which men are wont to call pleaſure? how near of kin is it to that which ſeems ſo contrary to it, pain?*

Sect. 9. Now the obſerving the ſtrange and ſudden viciſſitudes of theſe things, and what near neighbours *pain* and *pleaſure* were to each other, (ſo that there is frequently a paſſage out of one into the other) did yet more *entangle* them to give a clear account of the *origin* of both theſe. Thoſe who believe there was a *God*, who produced the world and ordered all things in it, did eaſily attribute whatever was *good* in the world to the *Fountain* of all *goodneſs*; but that any evil ſhould come from him they thought it *repugnant* to the very notion of a *Deity*; which they were ſo far right in, as it concerned the *evil* of *ſin*; which we have already ſhewed *God* could not be the *author* of; but therein they ſhewed their *ignorance* of the true *cauſe* of *evil*, that they did not look upon the miſeries of life as effects of *God's Juſtice* upon the world for the *evil* of *ſin*. And therefore that they might ſet the *origin* of *evil* far enough off from *God*, they made two different *Principles* of *things*, the one of *good*, and the other of *evil*; this *Plutarch* tells us was the moſt ancient and univerſal account which he could meet with of the *origin* of *good* and *evil*. To which purpoſe we have this ample *Teſtimony* of his in his
Plutarch. de Iſide & Oſir. p. 369. *ed. Fr.* learned diſcourſe, *de Iſide & Oſiride*, Διὸ καὶ παμπάλαιόν αὖτη κάτεισιν ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων καὶ νομοθετῶν, οἷς τε ποιηταὶ καὶ φιλοσόφους ἤδεσαν, τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀδύσποτον ἔχουσα, τὴν δ' ἕτέραν ἰσχυρὰν καὶ δυσεξάλειπτον, οὐκ ἐν λόγοις μόνον, οὐδὲ ἐν φήμαις, ἀλλὰ ἔν τε τελεταῖς ἔν τε θυσίαις, καὶ βαρβάροις καὶ Ἕλλησι πολλαχῆ διεφερομένην, ὡς ὕτ' ἄνευ καὶ ἄλογον καὶ ἀκυβέρνητον αἰωρεῖται τῷ αὐτομάτῳ τὸ πᾶν, ὕτε εἷς ἔχων ἡ κρείττων καὶ καθυ-

δύνων,

δύναν, ὥσπερ οἴαξιν ἅπτεσι πεπιστοῖς καλυσοῖς λόγοις; ἀλλὰ πολλὰ τὰ μεμιγμένα κακοῖς καὶ ἀγαθοῖς· μᾶλλον δὲ μηδὲν ἐν ὡς ἁπλῶς εἰπεῖν, ἄπρακτον ἐναῦθα τὸ φύσεως ἡγεμόνος· ἢ ἑνὸς μὲν ἑκὰς τὰ πάντα τὰ θεώγματα καπηλικῶς διανέμων ἀνακεράννυσιν ἡμῖν, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ δυοῖν ἐναντίων ἀρχῶν, καὶ δυοῖν ἀνθρώπων δυνάμεων, ἡ μὲν ἕλκει τὰ δεξιὰ καὶ καθ' εὐθείαν κατευθύνουσα, ἡ δὲ ἔμπαλιν ἀναστρέφουσα καὶ ἀνακλῶσα, ὅ τε βίος μικτὸς, ὅ τε κόσμος εἰ καὶ μὴ πᾶς, ἀλλ' ὁ περίγειος ἔτος καὶ μὴ σελήνης, ἀνόμαλος καὶ ποικίλος γέγονε, καὶ μεταβολὰς πάσας δυκόμενος· εἰ γὰρ ὑδὲν ἀναίτιον πέφυκε γίνεσθαι, αἰτίαν δὲ κακοῦ τ' ἀγαθὸν οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο, δυοῖν γένεσιν ἰδίαν καὶ ἀρχὴν, ὥσπερ ἀγαθοῦ καὶ κακοῦ, τὸν φύσιν ἔχειν. Which words I have the more largely cited, becauſe they give us the moſt full account of the antiquity, univerſality and reaſon of that opinion which aſſerts two different principles of good and evil. *It is a tradition* (ſaith he) *of great antiquity derived down from the ancient Maſters of Divine knowledge, and Formers of Common-wealths, to the Poets and Philoſophers, whoſe firſt Author cannot be found, and yet hath met with firm and unſhaken belief, not only in ordinary diſcourſes and reports, but was ſpread into the myſteries and ſacrifices both of* Greeks *and others, that the Univerſe did not depend on chance, and was deſtitute of mind and reaſon to govern it; neither was there one only reaſon which ſate at the ſtern, or held the reins, whereby he did order and govern the world; but ſince there is ſo much confuſion and mixture of good and evil in the world, that nature doth not produce any pure untainted good; there is not any one who like a Drawer takes the liquor out of two ſeveral veſſels, and mixeth them together, and after diſtributes them; but there are two principles and powers contrary to each other, whereof one draws us to the right hand, and directs us ſtraight forward, the other pulls us back, and turns us the other way; ſince we ſee the life of man ſo mixed as it is; and not only that, but the world too, at leaſt ſo much as is ſublunary and terreſtrial, which is ſubject to many varieties, irregularities and changes. For if nothing be without a cauſe, and good cannot be the cauſe of evil, it neceſſarily follows, that as there is a peculiar nature and principle which is the cauſe of good, ſo there muſt be another, which is the cauſe of evil.*

But leſt we ſhould think it was only a *Sect* of a kind of *Heathen Manichees* which held this opinion; he tells us, to prevent

prevent that καὶ δοκεῖ τοῦτο τοῖς πλείοσι καὶ σοφωτάτοις, *it was the opinion of the moſt, and wiſeſt, of the Heathen.* Now theſe two principles ſome (ſaith he) call *two oppoſite Gods*, whereof the one is the cauſe of *good*, and the other of *evil*; him they call Θεὸς, this Δαίμων. By this one would imagine that this very ancient *Tradition* was nothing elſe but the true account of the *origin* of *evil* a little diſguiſed. For the *Scripture* making the *Devil* the firſt *Author* of *evil* himſelf, and the firſt ſollicitor and tempter of *man* to it; who when *God* directed him ſtraight forward, pull'd man back, and put him quite out of his way, by which means all the miſeries of the world came into it: For while man kept cloſe to his Maker, his *integrity* and obedience were to him what the *vaſa umbilicalia* are to the child in the *Womb*; by them he received whatever tended to his ſubſiſtence and comfort: but *ſin cut* thoſe *veſſels* aſunder, and proved the *Midwife* of *miſery*, bringing man forth into a *world* of ſorrow and ſufferings: Now, I ſay, the *Scripture* taking ſuch eſpecial notice of *one*, as the chief of *Devils*, through whoſe means *evil* came into the world, this gave occaſion to the *Heathens*, when length of time had made the *original Tradition* more obſcure, to make theſe two, *God* and the *Dæmon*, as two *Anti-gods*, and ſo to be the *cauſes*, the *one* of all *good*, and the *other* of all *evil*. Which at laſt came to that (which was the *Devil*'s great deſign in thus corrupting the tradition) that both theſe *Anti-gods* ſhould have ſolemn *worſhip* by *Sacrifices*; the one by way of *impetration*, for beſtowing of *good*; the other by way of *deprecation*, for averting of *evil*. Such *Plutarch* there tells us were the *Oromaſdes* and *Arimanius* of *Zoroaſtres* which were worſhipped by the *Perſians*, the one for doing good, and the other for avoiding evil; the one they reſembled to light (or fire) the other to *darkneſs* and *ignorance*; what Animals were good and uſefull they aſcribed to *Oromaſdes*, and all venomous and noxious ones to *Arimanius*, whom *Plutarch* elſewhere calls ὁ πονηρὸν Δαίμονα Περσῶν, *the evil Dæmon of the Perſians.* The ſame *Diogenes Laertius* relates of the *Magi*, the *Philoſophers* of *Perſia*, that they made two diſtinct *principles*, Ἀγαθὸν Δαίμονα καὶ κακὸν, *a good and bad Dæmon*; for which he quotes *Dinon*, *Ariſtotle*, *Hermippus*, *Eudoxus*, and others. The ſame *Plutarch* makes to be the opinion of the ancient *Greeks*, who attri-

Plut. in Alex.
Diog. Laertius proœm. ad vit. Philoſoph.

attribute the *good* to *Jupiter Olympius*, the *bad* to *Hades*; the *Chaldeans*, saith he, *make the Planets their Gods*, of which two they suppose the cause of good; two more of only a malignant influence; and other three to be indifferent to either. The same he affirms of the *Aegyptians*, that whatever was *evil* and *irregular*, they ascribed to *Typho*; what was *good*, *comely* and *useful*, they attributed to *Isis* and *Osiris*; to *Isis* as the *passive*, *Osiris* as the *active* principle.

Thus we see how large a *spread* this opinion of the *origin* of *evil* had in the *Gentile* world; neither did it expire with *Heathenism*; but *Manes* retained so much of the Religion of his Countrey, being a *Persian*, that he made a strange *medley* of the *Persian* and *Christian* doctrine together. For that was his famous opinion, of which St. *Austin* tells us; *Iste duo principia inter se diversa atque adversa, eademque aeterna, & co-aeterna, hoc est, semper fuisse, composuit; duasque naturas atque substantias, boni, scilicet, & mali, sequens alios antiquos haereticos, opinatus est.* St. *Austin* thinks that *Manes* had his opinion concerning two principles from the ancient *Hereticks*, by whom I suppose he means the *Marcionists* and *Valentinians*; but it seems more probable that *Manes* had his doctrine immediately from his Countreymen, though it be generally thought that *Scythianus* and *Buddas* were his *Masters* in it. But from whomsoever it came, the opinion was merely *Heathen*, and not more contrary to *Scripture* than it is to *Reason*; the former I meddle not with, that opinion being now extinct in the *Christian* world; I only briefly consider the *unreasonableness* of it; to shew what a far better account of the *origin* of *evil* the *Scriptures* give us, than was discovered by the *Heathen Philosophers*. For on both sides that opinion is repugnant to the *notion* of a *Deity*, so that while they would make *two* such *Gods*, they make none at all. For how can the principle of good be God, if he hath not *Infinite power*, as well as *goodness*? and how can he have *Infinite power*, if he hath not the *management* of things in the world? and how can he have the *management* of things, if they be liable to *evil*, which the other *god*, which is the principle of *evil*, may lay upon it; from which, according to this supposition, the *principle* of good cannot rescue it? So that they who hold this opinion

Sect 10.

August. de Haeres. c. 46.

nion cannot, as *Simplicius* tells us, give God τὸ ἥμισυ τ᾽ ὄλης δυνάμεως, *the half of that infinite power* which belongs to him; for neither can he keep the good creatures which he makes from the *power* of the *evil Dæmon*, and therefore if he loves them, must be in continual *fears* of the *power* of the contrary *principle*; neither can he free them from the *evil* which the other lays upon them; for then *God's* power would be far greater than the evil *Dæmons*, and so he could be no *Anti-God*. And on the other side the *notion* or *Idea* of an *Infinite evil Being*, is in its self an *inconsistent Idea*; for it is an *Infinite non-entity*, if we suppose his very *Being* to lie in *Being evil*, which is only a *privation* of *goodness*; and besides if he be *Infinitely evil*, he must be *infinitely contrary* to the *good Principle*; and how can he be *infinitely contrary* which enjoys *several* of the same *perfections*, which the other hath, which are *infinity* of *essence* and *necessity* of *existence*? Now if this *Principle* of *evil* be absolutely *contrary* to the other, it must be contrary in all his *perfections*; for whatever is a *perfection*, belongs to that which is *good*; and now if it be contrary in every perfection, *Infinity of essence*, and *Necessity of existence*, being *two*, it must be as *contrary* as is imaginable to *them*, by which this evil *Principle* must be infinitely *defective* in *being* and *existence*, and so it will be an *infinite non-entity* which yet *exists*, which is the *height* of *contradiction*. Again, if there be such a contrary *principle*, which is the *cause* of all *evil*, then all *evil* falls out *unavoidably*, and by the *power* of this *infinitely evil* principle, by which means not only all *Religion*, but all *vertue* and *goodness* will be taken out of the world, if this evil *principle* be *infinite*; and if not *infinite*, no *Anti-god*: and not only so, but all difference of *good* and *evil* will be taken away (and then what need making two such contrary principles to give an account of the *origin* of evil?) for when once *evil* becomes thus *necessary*, it loseth its nature as a *moral evil*; for a *moral evil* implies in it a *voluntary breach* of some known *Law*; but how can that *breach* be *voluntary*, which was caused by an *Infinite power* in the most proper way of *efficiency*? And thus if all *freedom* of *will* be destroyed (as it is necessarily by this supposition) then no *Government* of the world by *Laws* can be supposed, and consequently no *reward* or

punish-

punishment, which suppose *liberty* of action, and by this means all *Religion*, *Laws*, and *Providence* are banished out of the world, and so this evil *Dæmon* will get all into his own hands, and instead of two contrary principles, there will be but one *infinitely evil Dæmon*. Which that there is not, appears by this, that notwithstanding all the *evil* in the world, there is so much *good* left in it, of which there would be none, if this evil *Dæmon* had *Infinite power*. By this we see there cannot be a principle infinitely evil; for while they go about to make two such *contrary principles* infinite, they make *neither* of them so, and so while they make two *Gods*, they take away any at all. So that this opinion of the *Origin* of *evil*, is manifestly *absurd*, *irrational*, and *contradictious*.

But all the *Heathen Philosophers* were not so *gross* as to imagine two such *Anti-gods* with infinitely active power; but yet *those* who would not in terms assert it, might be driven to it by the *consequence* of their opinion concerning the *Origin of evil*, which did suppose a *necessity* of it in nature, as flowing from that *passive principle* out of which the world was produced. Hence it was that *Heraclitus* as *Plutarch* tells us, attributed the *Origin* of all *things* to *discord* and *antipathy*, and was wont to say, that when *Homer* wished *Sect.* 11.

De Isid. & Osiride.

ἐκ τε θεῶν ἔριν ἐκ τ' ἀνθρώπων ἀπολέσθαι.

that all contention were banished out of the world, that he did secretly *curse* the *Origin* of things, and wished the *ruin* of the world. So *Empedocles* called the active *principle* which did good *Harmony* and *Friendship*, but the other

Νεῖκος ὐλόμενον καὶ δῆριν αἱματόεσσαν.

by which he makes it to be a *quarrelsome*, *pernicious*, and *bloody principle*. The same *Plutarch* tells us of those two renowned *Philosophers*, *Pythagoras* and *Plato*. Thence he tells us the *Pythagoreans* called the *principle* of *good*, τὸ ἓν, πεπερασμένον, τὸ μένον, τὸ ἰσὸν, τὸ περιττὸν, τὸ τετράγωνον, τὸ δίκαιον, τὸ λαμπρόν. *Unity*, *finite*, *quiescent*, *straight*, *uneven number*, *square*, *right and splendid*; the principle of evil, they called τὸ δυάδος, τὸ ἄπειρον, τὸ φερόμενον, τὸ κεκλιμένον, τὸ ἄρτιον, τὸ ἑτερόμη-

ρες, τὸ ἄπειρον, τὸ ἀσύστατον, τὸ σκολιὸν, τὸ σκοτεινόν. *The Binary, Infinite, moving, crooked, even, long of one ſide, unequal, left, obſcure.* The opinion of *Plato* he tells us is very *obſcure*, it being his purpoſe to conceal it; but he ſaith in his old age in his book *de Legibus*, ὃ δὴ ἀνεγκλήτως, ὃ δὴ ἀμφιβολικῶς, *without any if's, or and's*, he aſſerts the world to be *moved* by more than one *principle*, by *two* at the leaſt, τὴν μὲν ἀγαθοῦ φύσιν, τὴν δὲ ἐναντίαν ταύτῃ, καὶ ἕξιν ἐναντίων δυνατὴν. *The one of a good and benign nature, the other contrary to it both in its nature and operations.* *Numenius* in *Chalcidius* thus delivers the *opinions* of *Pythagoras* and *Plato de originibus* as he ſpeaks; *Igitur Pythagoras quoque, inquit Numenius, fluidam & ſine qualitate ſylvam eſſe cenſet; nec tamen ut Stoici naturæ mediæ, interque malorum bonorumque viciniam, ſed plane noxiam; Deum quippe eſſe (ut etiam Platoni videtur) initium & cauſam bonorum, ſylvam malorum: ſo that according to Numenius,* both *Plato* and *Pythagoras* attributed the *origin* of *evil* to the *malignity* of *matter*, and ſo they make *evils* to be neceſſarily conſequent upon the *Being* of *things*. For thus he delivers expreſly the opinion of *Pythagoras*; *qui ait, exiſtente providentia, mala quoque neceſſario ſubſtitiſſe, propterea quod ſylva ſit, & eadem ſit malitia prædita: Platonemque idem Numenius laudat, quod duas mundi animas autumet. Unam beneficentiſſimam; malignam alteram,* ſc. *Sylvam. Igitur juxta Platonem mundo bona ſua Dei, tanquam Patris liberalitate collata ſunt; mala vero, matris ſylvæ vitio cohæſerunt.* But *Plutarch* will by no means admit, that *Plato* attributes the *Origin* of *evil* merely to *matter*, but he makes the *principle* of *evil* to be ſomething diſtinct from *matter*, which he calls τὴν ἄτακτον, καὶ ἀόριστον, αὐτοκίνητον ἢ καὶ κινητικὴν ἀρχὴν, *a confuſed infinite, ſelf-moving, ſtirring principle*; which (ſaith he) he elſewhere calls *Neceſſity*, and in his *de Legibus* plainly, ψυχὴν ἄτακτον καὶ κακοπρόϊον, *a diſorderly and malignant Soul*, which cannot be underſtood of mere *matter*, when he makes his *Hyle* ἄμορφον καὶ ἀσχημάτιστον καὶ πάσης ποιότητος καὶ δυνάμεως οἰκείας ἔρημον, *Without form or figure, and deſtitute of all qualities and power of operation: and it is impoſſible* (ſaith he) *that that which is of it ſelf ſuch an inert principle as matter is, ſhould by Plato be ſuppoſed to be the cauſe and principle of evil*, which he elſewhere calls ἀνάγκην πολλὰ τοῦ θείου δυσμαχοῦσαν καὶ ἀφηνιάζουσαν, *Neceſſity*

Chalcid. in Timæ. p. 394.

De Animæ procreat. c. Timæ.

Necessity which often resisted God and cast off his reins. So that according to *Plutarch*, *Plato* acquits both *God* and *Hyle* from being the *Origin* of *evil*, τὸν μὲν ὕλην διαφυγεῖν ἀναίτιον ἀναλλάτλων, ἐξ ἧς θεῷ τὴν ἄλογον κινεῖσθαι καὶ πλημμελῶς, and therefore attributes it to that *malignant spirit* which moves the *matter*, and is the cause of all the *disorderly motions* in the World. But what this *spirit* should be, neither he nor any one else could ever understand; what *darkness* and *ignorance* then was there among the *wisest* of *Philosophers* concerning the *Origin* of *evil*, when they were so confused and obscure in the account which they gave of it, that their greatest *admirers* could not understand them!

But though *Plato* seemed so ambiguous in his judgment of the *Origin* of *evil*, whether he should attribute it to the *Hyle*, or some *malignant spirit* in it, the *Stoicks* were more *dogmatical*, and plainly imputed the cause of *evil* to the *perversity* of *matter*. So *Chalcidius* tells us, that the *Stoicks* made matter not to be *evil* in it *self* as *Pythagoras*, but that it was *indifferent* to either; *perrogati igitur unde mala? perversitatem seminarium malorum causati sunt*: they made the *perversity* of *matter* the *Origin* of *evil*; but as he well observes, *nec expediunt adhuc unde ipsa perversitas, cum juxta ipsos duo sint initia rerum, Deus & sylva. Deus summum & præcellens bonum; sylva, ut censent, nec bonum nec malum.* They give no rational account whence this perversity of matter should arise, when according to the *Stoicks*, there are but two *principles* of things, *God* and *matter*, whereof the one is perfectly *good*, the other neither *good* nor *evil*. But this *perversity* they tell us is something necessarily consequent upon the *Generation* of things. πάντα γὰρ ὅσα πάθη τὰ τῇ γενέσει παρεπόμενα, ὥσπερ ἰὸς τῷ χαλκῷ, καὶ ὁ ῥυπὸς τῷ σώματι, *these are affections*, (*viz.* the disorders in the world) which *follow the Generation of things, as rust comes upon brass, and filth upon the body*, as the counterfeit *Trismegistus* speaks; so *Maximus Tyrius* saith that *evils* in the world are ὑ τέχνης ἔργα, ἀλλ' ὕλης πάθη, *not any works of art, but the affections of matter*. *Non potest artifex mutare materiam*, saith *Seneca*, when he is giving an account *why God suffers evils in the world*: and elsewhere gives this *account* why *evils* came into the World, *non quia cessat ars, sed quia id in quo exercetur* inob-

Sect. 12.

Chalcid. in Tim. p. 395.

Maxim. Tyrius Serm. 25.

Seneca de Provid. c. 5.

Præfat. ad natur. quæst.

inobſequens arti eſt. So that the *Origin* of *evil* by this account of it lies wholly upon the *perverſity* of matter, which it ſeems was uncapable of being put into better order by that *God* who produced the world out of that matter which the *Stoicks* ſuppoſed to be *eternal.* And the truth is, the avoiding the attributing the cauſe of evil to *God*, ſeems to have been the great reaſon, why they rather choſe to make it matter *neceſſary* and *co exiſtent* with *God*, and this was the only plauſible *pretence* which *Hermogenes* had for following the *Platoniſts* and *Stoicks* in this opinion, that he might ſet *God* far enough off from being the *author* of *ſin*; but I cannot ſee what *advantage* comes at all by this *Hypotheſis*, but it is
1. chargeable with as many difficulties as any other. For, 1. *It either deſtroys God's omnipotency, or elſe makes him the approver of evil*, ſo that if he be not *auctor*, he muſt be *aſſentator mali*, as *Tertullian* ſpeaks againſt *Hermogenes*, becauſe he ſuffered evil to be in matter; for, as he argues, *aut enim potuit emendare ſed noluit; aut voluit quidem, verum non potuit infirmus Deus; ſi potuit & noluit, malus & ipſe, quia malo favit; & ſic jam habetur ejus licet non inſtituerit, quia tamen ſi noluiſſet illud eſſe, non eſſet; ipſe jam fecit eſſe, quod noluit non eſſe: quo quid eſt turpius? ſi voluit eſſe quod ipſe noluit feciſſe, adverſum ſemetipſum egit, cum & voluit eſſe quod noluit feciſſe, & noluit feciſſe quod voluit eſſe.* So that little advantage is gained for the clearing the true *origin* of *evil* by this opinion; for either *God could* have taken away evil out of *matter* but *would* not, or elſe *would* but *could* not; this latter deſtroys *God's Omnipotency*, the former his *goodneſs*; for by that means *evil* is in the world by his *conſent* and *approbation*; for if *God* would not remove it when he might, the *Being* of it will come from him; when if he would have hindred it, it would not have been, and ſo *God* by not rooting out of evil, will be found an *aſſertor* of it; *male ſi per voluntatem*; *turpiter ſi per neceſſitatem, aut famulus erit mali Deus, aut amicus*; if *God's will* were the cauſe why ſin was, it reflects on his *goodneſs*, if *God's power* could not hinder it, it deſtroys his *omnipotency*. So that by this opinion *God* muſt
2. either be a *ſlave* or a *friend* to *evil.* 2. *This principle overturns the foundations of Religion, and all tranſactions between God and mens ſouls in order to their welfare*, becauſe it makes evil

Tertull. adv. Hermog. c. 10.

evil to be necessarily *existent* in the World; which appears from hence, in that *evil* doth result from the *Being* of *matter*, and so it must necessarily be, as *matter* is supposed to be; for whatever results from the *Being* of a thing, must be *co-existent* with it; and so what flows from what doth *necessarily* exist, must have the same Mode of *existence* which the *Being* it self hath; as is evident in all the *attributes* of *God*, which have the same *immutability* with his *nature*: now then, if *evil* did exist from *eternity* together with *matter*, it must *necessarily* exist as *matter* doth, and so evil will be *invincible* and *unavoidable* in the World; which if once granted, renders *Religion useless*, makes *God's Commands unrighteous*, and *destroys* the *foundation* of *God's proceedings* in the *day* of *Judgment*. 3. *This opinion makes God not to be the author of good*, while it denies him to be the *Author of evil*. For either there was nothing else but *evil* in this *eternal matter*, or there was a *mixture* of *good* and *evil*; if nothing else but *evil* which did necessarily *exist*, it were as *impossible* for *God* to produce *good* out of it, as to *annihilate* the necessarily existent *matter*. If there were a *mixture* of *good* and *evil*, they were both there either *necessarily* or *contingently*; how could either of them be *contingently* in that which is supposed to be *necessarily existent*, and *no free agent*? If they be both there necessarily, 1. It is hard conceiving how two such contrary things as *good* and *evil*; should both necessarily be in the same *uniform* matter. 2. Then *God* is no more the Author of *Good* than of *Evil* in the World; for he is said not to be the Author of *evil* because it comes from *matter*; and so it appears *good* doth too, and so *God* according to this *opinion*, is no more the Author of *good*, than he is of *evil*. But if it be said *that good is not in matter, but God produced that out of nothing*: Then I reply, 1. If *God* did produce *good* out of nothing, why did he not produce *matter* out of nothing too? if he were so powerful as to do the one, there could be no defect of power as to the other. What insufficiency is there in *God's* nature for producing all things out of nothing, if he can produce any thing out of nothing? 2. If *God* did produce *good* out of *evil*, why could he not have removed all *evil* out of *matter*? for *good* could not be produced but by the removing of some *evil* which was before that *good*, and so *God* might have removed all evil out of *matter*. 3.

And

And so by not doing it when he might, this opinion gives not the least satisfaction in point of reason for acquitting *God* from being the Author of *sin*, nor for clearing the true *Origin* of *evil*.

Sect. 13. Thus we have now compared the account given of it in *Scripture*, with that given by the *Heathen Philosophers*, and find it in every thing more *clear*, *rational* and *satisfactory* than theirs is. Which doubtless is the reason, why the more modern *Philosophers*, such as *Hierocles*, *Porphyrie*, *Simplicius* and others, though otherwise great *opposers* of *Christianity*, did yet in this *side* with the *Scriptures* and attribute the *original* of *evil* not to *matter* but to the *Will* of *man*. And whoever is seriously conversant with the *writings* of those *Philosophers*, who were ἐκ τῆς ἱερᾶς γραφῆς of the *sacred succession*, out of the *School* of *Ammonius* at *Alexandria*, such as *Plotinus*, *Porphyrius*, *Jamblichus* and *Hierocles*, will find them write in a higher *strain* concerning many *weighty* and *important* truths, as of the *degeneracy* of mens *souls* from *God*, and the *way* of the *souls* returning to him, than the most *sublime* of the ancient *Philosophers* had done. Which *speculations* of theirs *no doubt* arose not so much from the *School* of *Plato*, and *Pythagoras*, as of that great restorer of *Philosophy* *Ammonius* of *Alexandria*; whose *Scholars* *Herennius*, *Origen* and *Plotinus* were. Who living and dying a Christian, as *Eusebius* and *Hierom* assure us, whatever *Porphyrius* suggests to the contrary, did communicate to his *Scholars* the sublimer *Mysteries* of *Divine Revelation*, together with the *speculations* of the ancient *Philosophers*: which *Holstenius* conceives he did with an *adjuration* of *secrecy*, which he tells us *Porphyrius* himself acknowledgeth, that those three Scholars of *Ammonius*, *Herennius*, *Origen* and *Plotinus*, were under an *obligation* to each other not to reveal and discover, though it were after *violated* by them. It is an easie matter to conceive what an *excellent improvement* might be made of the ancient *Platonick Philosophy* by the advantage of the *Scriptures*, by one who was so well versed in both of them as *Ammonius* is supposed to have been; and how agreeable and becoming would that *Philosophy* seem which had only its *rise* from *Plato*, but its *height* and *improvement* from those rich and truly divine *Truths* which were *inlaid* with them? The want of observing this, *viz.* whence it was that those excellent *discourses* in the latter *Platonists* had

Euseb. Eccles. hist. l. 6. c. 19. Hieron. de Script. Eccl. De vit. & Script. Porphyr. c. 6.

had their true *original*, hath given occasion to several mistakes among learned men: as first the over-valuing of the *Platonick Philosophy*, as though in many of the *discourses* and *notions* of it, it seemed to some (who were more in love with Philosophy than the Scriptures) to out-goe what is *discovered* therein concerning the same *things*. *A most groundless and unworthy censure!* when it is more than *probable* (and might be largely manifested, were it here a fit opportunity) that whatever is truly *generous* and *noble* in the *sublimest discourses* of the *Platonists*, had not only its primitive rise, but its *accession* and *improvement* from the *Scriptures* wherein it is still contained in its native *lustre* and *beauty*, without those *paintings* and impure *mixtures* which the sublimest *truths* are corrupted with in the *Platonick Writings*. The reason of which is, though these *Philosophers* grew suddenly rich through the spoils they had taken out of the Scriptures, yet they were loth to be known, from whence they had them, and would seem to have had that out of their own gardens which was only transplanted from the *Sacred writings*. Therefore we find them not mentioning the *Scriptures* and the *Christian doctrine* without some contempt of its *meanness* and simplicity; and whatever improvement they had gained by them, they would have it less taken notice of by professing their *opposition* to the *Christians*, as is notorious in those great *Philosophers*, *Porphyrius*, *Jamblichus*, *Hierocles*, *Simplicius* and others. It being their design to take so much and no more out of the *Christian Doctrine* as they could well suit with their *Platonick notions*, by which means they so disguised the *faces* of the *Truths* they stole, that it were hard for the right *owners* of them to know them again. Which was the *grand artifice* of their great Master *Plato*, who doubtless by means of his abode and acquaintance in *Ægypt* about the time when the *Jews* began to flock thither, had more certain knowledge of many *truths* of grand importance, concerning the *Deity*, the *Nature* of the *soul*, the *Origin* of the *world*, than many other *Greek Philosophers* had; but yet therein lay his great fault, that he wrapt up and disguised his notions in such a *fabulous* and ambiguous manner, that partly it might be less known from whence he had them, and that they might find better entertainment among the *Greeks*, than they were ever like to do in their plain

plain and native dreſs. Which *Plato* himſelf ſeems ſomewhere to intimate, when he ſaith, that what the *Greeks* received from the *Barbarians*, ἄλλον τῶν ἐν πλῷ ἀπεργάζονται, *they put it into a better faſhion, i. e.* they diſguiſe it, alter and change it as they pleaſe, and put it into a *Greek habit*, that it might never be ſuſpected to have been a Foreigner. Thence *Tertullian* ſpeaks with a great deal of *truth* and *freedom* of ſuch Philoſophers who did *ingenii ſitim de prophetarum fonte irrigare* as he expreſſeth it) that quenched their thirſt after knowledge with the Waters of *Jordan* (though they did not like *Naaman*, cure the *leproſie* of the *head* by waſhing in them) for as *Tertullian* ſaith, they came only *ex negotio curioſitatis*, more to pleaſe the *itch* of their curioſity than to cure it.

Plato in Epinom.

Apol. c. 47.

And wherein they ſeemed moſt to agree with the Scriptures, their difference was beyond their agreement. *Siquidem vera quæque & conſonantia Prophetis aut aliunde commendant aut aliorſum ſubornant, cum maxima injuria veritatis quam efficiunt aut adjuvari falſis aut patrocinari. Whatever the Philoſophers ſpeak agreeable to the Scriptures, either they do not own whence they had it, or turn it quite another way, whereby they have done the truth a great deal of injury, by mixing it with their corruptions of it, and making that little truth a plea for the reſt of their errors.* Neither was this only among the ancient *Philoſophers*, but the *Primitive Chriſtians* began to diſcern the under-hand workings of ſuch, who ſought to blend Philoſophy and Chriſtianity together; for *Tertullian* himſelf takes great notice of ſuch, who did *Veritatis dogmata ad Philoſophicas ſententias adulterare*, ſuborn Chriſtianity to maintain Philoſophy; which makes him cry out, *Viderint qui Stoicum, & Platonicum, & Dialecticum Chriſtianiſmum protulerunt*; by which we ſee what tampering there was betimes rather to bring *Chriſtianity* down to *Philoſophy*, than to make *Philoſophy truckle* under the *truth* and *ſimplicity* of the *Scriptures*. Whether *Ammonius* himſelf, and ſome others of the School of *Alexandria*, might be guilty in this kind, is not here a place to enquire, though it be too evident in the *Writings* of ſome, that they rather ſeek to accommodate the Scriptures to the Sentiments of the *School* of *Plato*, than to *reform* that by the *Scriptures*; but I ſay, however it were with thoſe who were *Chriſtians*, yet thoſe who were not, but only *Philoſophers*, made

Tertul. de Anima, cap. 2.

De Proſcrip. adverſ. haret. cap. 7.

made their great *advantage* by it. For when they found what was *reconcilable* with the *Doctrine* of *Plato* in the *Scriptures*, done already to their hands, by the *endeavours* chiefly of *Ammonius* and *Origen*, they greedily embrace those improvements of their *Philosophy*, which would tend so much to the *credit* of it, and as contemptuously reject what they found *irreconcilable* with the *dictates* of their *Philosophy*. Now what an *unreasonable* thing is it, when whatever was noble and *excellent* in the *Heathen Philosophy* was derivative from the *Scriptures*, as the sacred *Fountain* of it, that the meeting with such things should in the least redound to the *prejudice* of the *Scriptures* from whence it was originally derived? when on the other side it should be a great *confirmation* to our *faith*, as to the *Scriptures*, that they who were professed *Philosophers* and *Admirers* only of *reason*, did so readily embrace some of those grand *Truths* which are contained in the *Word* of *God*.

For which we need no other *instance*, than that before us, concerning the *origin* of *evil*, the making out of which will tend to the clearing the *last thing* mentioned concerning it, which was, That *the most material things in it are attested by the Heathens themselves*. And this *honey* which is gained out of the *Lion*'s mouth, must needs *taste* sweeter than any other doth. For it is a weak and groundless *mistake* on the other side, which is the *second* (which ariseth from meeting things consonant to the Scriptures in the *Writings* of *Philosophers*) presently to conclude from such things, that they were *Christians* (as it is said some have lately done in the behalf of *Hierocles*.) For there being such clear accounts given in *Scripture* of the grand *difficulties* and *perplexities* which the minds of men were troubled with, when these came to the knowledge of such who were of *Philosophick* and *Inquisitive heads*, we cannot but think they would meet with *acceptation* among them, especially if they might be made consistent with their former *speculations*. Thus it was in our present case concerning the *origin* of *evil*, we have already beheld the lamentable *perplexities* the ancient *Philosophers* were in about it, what *Meanders* they were lost in for want of a *clue* to guide them through them; now it pleased *God*, after the coming of *Christ* in the *flesh*, to declare to the world the only way for the recovery *Sect.* 14.

very of *ſouls*, and their *eternal ſalvation*, the *news* of which being ſpread ſo far that it ſoon got among the *Philoſophers*, could not but make them more *inquiſitive* concerning the *ſtate* and *condition* of their ſouls, and when they had ſearched what the *Philoſophers* had formerly diſcovered of it, their *curioſity* would preſently prompt them to ſee what account of things concerning the *ſouls* of *men* was delivered by the Preachers of this *New doctrine*. By this they could not but preſently underſtand that they declared all men's ſouls to be in a moſt degenerate and low *condition*, by being ſo continually under the power of the moſt unreaſonable and unruly paſſions, that they were eſtranged from *God*, and prone to fix on things very unſuitable to their nature, as to all which, their own inward ſence and experience could not but tell them that theſe things were notoriouſly true; and therefore they enquire further how theſe things came to be ſo; which they receive a full *account* of in Scripture, that man's *ſoul* was at firſt created *pure* and *holy*, and in perfect *friendſhip* with *God*, that *God* dealt bountifully and favourably with man; only expected *obedience* to his *Laws*; that man being a *free agent*, did abuſe his *liberty*, and *diſobeyed* his *Maker*; and thence came the true πτερορρύησις, the *feathers* of the *ſoul*, whereby it ſoared up to Heaven, *moulted* away, and the *ſoul* ſunk below its ſelf into a *degenerate* and *apoſtate condition*, out of which it is impoſſible to be recovered without ſome *extraordinary expreſſion* of *Divine Favour*. Now what is there in all this account, but what is hugely ſuitable to *principles* of *reaſon*, and to the general *experience* of the *world*, as to thoſe things which were capable of being tryed by it? And thoſe *Philoſophers* who were any thing *ingenuous*, and Lovers of *truth*, could not but confeſs the *truth* of thoſe things which we are now ſpeaking of, *viz. That men's ſouls are in a very degenerate condition. That the moſt rational account of it is, That man by the act of his own will brought himſelf into it; and that in order to the happineſs of men's ſouls, there was a neceſſity of recovery out of this condition.*

Sect. 15. 1. *As to the degeneracy of the ſouls of men*; This was the common complaint of thoſe *Philoſophers*, who minded the government of themſelves, and the practice of vertue, eſpecially of the *Platoniſts* and *Stoicks*. *Seneca* in all his moral Diſcourſes, eſpecially in his *Epiſtles*, may ſpeak ſufficiently in behalf of the

the *Stoicks*, how much they lamented the degeneracy of the world. And the *Platonists* all complain of the *slavery* of the *soul* in the body, and that it is here by way of *punishment*, for something which was done before; and which makes me somewhat inclinable to think, that *Plato* knew more of the *lapse* of *mankind*, than he would openly discover; and for that end disguised it after his usual *manner* in that *hypothesis* of *præ-existence*, which taking it *Cabbalistically* (for I rather think the opinion of *præ-existence* is so to be taken, than the *history* of the *fall* of *man*) may import only this, *That men's souls might be justly (supposed to be created happy, but by reason of the Apostasie of man's soul from God, all Souls come now into their bodies as into a kind of prison, they being enslaved to the brutish part within them, there having been such a true* Μετεμψύχωσις, *the soul being now deprived of her chiefest perfections in this her low and degenerate condition.* And it seems far more rational to me to interpret those *persons* opinions to a *Cabbalistical*, or an *Allegorical* sence, who are known to have writ *designedly* in a way *obscure* and *ambiguous*, than to force those men's *expressions* to *Cabbala's*, who profess to write a *plain History*, and that with the greatest *simplicity* and *perspicuity*. But it cannot but seem very strange that an *hypothesis* capable of being *reconciled* to the plain *literal* sence of the *Scriptures* (delivered by a *person* who useth great *artifice* and *cunning* to disguise his opinions, and such a person withall, who (by such persons themselves who make use of this opinion to that end) is supposed to have been very conversant with the writings of *Moses*) should be taken in its *literal* sence, as it really imports *præ-existence* of each particular *soul* in the *grossest manner*; and this should be made to be a part of the *philosophick Cabbala* of the *writings* of such a *person*, who useth not the least *artifice* to *disguise* his *sence*, nor gives us any where the least intimation that he left behind him such *plaited pictures* in his *history* of the *beginning* of the *world*, that if you look *straight forward*, you may see a *literal Cabbala*, on the *one side* a *philosophical*, and on the other a *moral*. But now if we remove the *Cabbala* from *Moses* to *Plato*, we may find no *incongruity* or *repugnancy* at all either as to *Plato* his way of *writing*, or the *consonancy* of the *opinion* so interpreted to the plain genuine *sence* of *Moses*, if by *Plato* his opinion of the

præ-existence and *descent* of *souls*, be understood by the *former*, the *happy state* of the *soul* of *man* in *conjunction* with *God*; and by the latter, the *low* and *degenerate condition* which the *soul* is in, after *Apostasie* from him. Which the latter *Platonists* are so large and eloquent in expressing. *Porphyrie*, where he speaks of some things he counsels men to doe, hath these words, *But if we cannot doe them, let us at least doe that which was so much lamented of old*, Τὸ ὀδυνώμενον πρὸς τῶν παλαιῶν, which is, ὡς τοίων ἔκλυεν ἐείδων, ἔκλε νεκύων ἡδομένδε, ὅτι τὸ θεῖον καὶ ἀκήρατον, καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν ἀβλαβὲς σώζειν ἐ δυνάμεθα. *Let us at the least join with our Fore-fathers in lamenting this, that we are compounded of such disagreeing and contrary principles, that we are not able to preserve divine, pure and unspotted Innocency.* And *Hierocles* fully expresseth his sence of the *degeneracy* of *mankind*, in these words; Οἱ δὲ πλεῖστοι κακοὶ καὶ τὰ πρωτοπαθείας ἥττους καὶ φρενοβλαβείᾳ ὑπὸ τὰ εἰς γλὼ νεύσιας ἡνιόμενοι, ὡς καὶ τοῦτο πᾶσι ἑαυτοῖς τὸ κακὸν ἔχειν, διὰ τὸ βεβλαβῆσθαι φυγεῖν ἀπὸ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἀπομερίσαι αὐτὲς τὰ τότε ὁμιλίας, ἧς εὐτύχουν ἐν αὐγῇ καθαρᾷ διάγοντες· τὰ δὲ ἀπὸ Θεοῦ χώρισμον βλάπτουσα τὰς φρένας ἡ πρὸς γλὼ νεῦσα ὕλοι. *The most of men in the world are bad, and under the command of their passions, and grown impotent through their propensity to earth; which great evil they have brought upon themselves, by their wilfull Apostasie from God, and withdrawing themselves from that Society with him which they once enjoyed in pure light: which departure of men's souls from God, which is so hurtfull to the minds of men, is evident by their strong inclination to the things of this world.* The same Author mentions, with much approbation, that speech of *Heraclitus*, speaking of those *souls* which are ἄπταιστοι εἰς κακίαν, which I cannot better render, *than undeclinably good*, he saith, ὅτι ζῶμεν τὰ ἐκείνων θάνατον, τεθνήκαμεν δὲ τὰ ἐκείνων βίον· *We live their death, and die their life:* κάτεισι δὲ καὶ ἀποπίπτει τὸ εὐδαίμονος χώρας ὁ ἄνθρωπος. *For man is now fallen down from that blessed region,* and as *Empedocles* the *Pythagorean* speaks,

De Abstinen. lib. 3. sect. 27.

Hieroc. in Pythag. Carm. p. 261.

Φυγὰς θεόθεν καὶ ἀλήτης
Νείκεϊ μαινομένῳ πίσυνος.

Which words cannot be better rendred, than in the words the Scripture useth concerning *Cain*, *and he went from the presence*

presence of the Lord, and was a fugitive in the earth, and under continual *perplexities*. For the *soul* of *man* having left τὸ λειμῶνα τὸ ἀληθείας (it is *Hierocles* his own *expression*) the *pleasant meadow* of *truth* (a fit description of *Paradise* τῇ ὁρμῇ τὸ πτεροῤῥυήσεως εἰς γένεσιν ἔρχεται σῶμα ὀλβίου αἰῶνος ἀμειλθεῖς. *Through the violence of her moulting, or deplumation, she comes into this earthly body, deprived of that blessed life, which she before enjoyed.* Which he tells us is very consonant to *Plato*'s sence of the κάθοδος, or descent of *souls*, that when by reason of their *impotency* of fixing wholly on *God* they suffer συντυχίαν καὶ πτεροῤῥύησιν, *some great loss, and a deprivation of former perfections*, (which I suppose is meant by the πτεροῤῥύησις, the souls *impotency* of *flying* up above this *earthly world*) then they *lapse* into these *terrestrial* and *mortal bodies*. So *Hierocles* concludes with this excellent and Divine speech, ὥσπερ οὖν ἡ ἀπόστασις φυγὴ, καὶ ἡ πτεροῤῥύησις τῆς κεφιζόντων ἡμᾶς πρὸς τὰ ἄνω εἰς τὸ θνητὸν ἔνστηκε τόπον, οἷς τὰ κακὰ συνέρχεται· οὕτως οὖν ἡ τῶν θνητῶν ἀποστασία ἀποζωὴ, καὶ ἡ τῆς ἀρετῆς, οἷον πτερῶν τινῶν ἔκφυσις πρὸς τὸ τῆς καλῆς καθαρὸν τόπον, εἰς τὴν θείαν εὐζωίαν ἡμᾶς ἀνάξει. *As therefore by apostasie from God, and the moulting of those feathers of our souls, whereby we may be raised up above this world, we have fallen into this place of mortals which is compassed about with evils: So by the casting off carnal affections, and by the growth of vertues like new feathers to the soul, we shall ascend to the place of pure and perfect good, and to the enjoyment of a divine life.* So much more becoming *Christians* do these excellent *Philosophers* speak of the *degeneracy* of *men's souls*, and the consequents of it, than *some* who would be accounted the followers of *reason*, as well as of *Christ*, who make it so much of their *business* to *extenuate* the *fall* of *man*. Which we find those who were mere Philosophers, far more *rational* and *ingenuous* in, than those who pretend so highly to *reason*; but I think with as little of it as any, supposing the *Scriptures* to be of *Divine authority*. But it is not here our *business* to consider the opinions of those who pretend to *Christianity*, but only of such who pretending only to *reason*, have yet consented with the *doctrine* of the *Scriptures* as to the *degeneracy* of the *Souls* of men, that it lies in an *Apostasie* from *God*, and having lost those *perfections* which they had before. *Hierocl. in Pythag. p. 254.*

That

Sect 16. 2.

That man's will is the cauſe of his Apoſtaſie; this we have already manifeſted at large from the teſtimony and reaſon of *Simplicius*, and *Hierocles* is as large and clear in it as the other, with expreſſions much of the ſame nature. Μέση γὰρ ἔστι ἡ τῆς ἀνθρώπου ὑσίας φύσις τε ἀεὶ νοήσεως ἐ θεοῦ, καὶ φύσις μηδέποτε νοῆσαι πεφυκότων, ἄνευσι θεοῦ ἐκείνα, καὶ κάτεισι πρὸς ταῦτα, νῦ κλήσεως καὶ ἀποζολῆς, πρὸς τὴν θείαν ὁμοίωσιν καὶ τὴν ἀθεότητα, διὰ τὸ ἐ φύσεως ἀμφίβιον ἀναμίξ ἐ ἐικῆ μοίρᾳ οἰκειμένην. *Man's nature lying between thoſe beings which perpetually contemplate God, and thoſe which are uncapable of it, it ſometimes aſcends to thoſe, and ſometimes deſcends to theſe, according as it obſerves or rejects the dictates of reaſon, and ſo by reaſon of the indifferency of the will is liable to take upon it the ſimilitude of God or a beaſt.* Ταῦτ' ἂν ὁ περὶ ἐ ἀνθρωπίνης ἐννοηθῇ ὑσίας, οἷς ἂν πῶς αὐθαιρέτοις πάθεσιν ἔχουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, καὶ πῶς τελήμονες καὶ τάλανες ἐ ἑαυτῶν αἱρέσεσι γίνονται. *And whoever throughly conſiders this, will eaſily underſtand, how men are the cauſes of their own evils, and become unhappy and miſerable through their own choice and ſelf-wills.* Which he brings in by way of explication of that truly golden *Pythagorean* Verſe,

Γνῶσι δ' ἀνθρώπους αὐθαιρέτοις πάθεσ' ἔχοντας
Τλήμονας.

Men are grown miſerable through their own fault. And afterwards *Hierocles* excellently deſcribes the nature of *evil* in theſe words, ἣν ὑ συμφυὲς ἅμα καὶ ὀλίκτιλον ἡμῖν κακὸν, ἡ τῆς αὐτεξουσίου φορᾶς φύσιν κίνησις. *Both our natural and contracted pravity, is nothing elſe but the unnatural motion of our free wills:* according to which, ſaith he, ἐναπῶδαι τοῖς θείοις νόμοις περιώμεθα, ὑδὲν ἐπαιδαγωγούμενοι ὅσον ἑαυτοὺς βλάπτομεν, διὰ τὸ δοκεῖν ἀνιπείπτην Θεῷ· ἀλλ' μόνον τόδο τυφλῶς ὁρῶντες, ὅπ ἐδυνήθημεν ἀφιάσαι ἀπ' ἐκείνα διαμῶν. *We dare to contradict the Laws of God, not being ſenſible how much we injure our ſelves when we doe it; and only look at this, that we are able to caſt off the reins of God's Laws from our necks.* And he truly ſaith, *That it is the greateſt abuſe of liberty to offend God, when we either doe what he forbids, or neglect what he requires.* Ἵνα ἑκατέρωθεν ἡ ἀθλιότης ἑαυτοὺς πληρώσωσιν οἱ ἀ θεῖον νόμον ἐκβαίνοντες, τῷ τε μὴ ποιεῖν τὰ προστεταγμένα καὶ τῷ ποιεῖν τὰ ἀπηγορευμένα. *So that on both ſides men bring miſery upon themſelves, by tranſgreſſing the divine Law, both*

In aur. Carm. Pag. 258.

both by not doing what they are commanded, and by doing what they are forbidden. So that he fully aſcribes the *origin* of *evil* to the τὸ αὐτεξούσιον κίνημα τῆς ψυχῆς διαπτὸν, as he calls it, *the irregular motion of the will of man*, which we have already ſhewed to be the doctrine of the Scriptures.

As to the neceſſity of the ſoul's recovery from this condition, in order to her felicity, we have theſe *Philoſophers* expreſſing their conſent with the *Scriptures*; *Porphyrius*, as St. *Auguſtine* tells us in the end of his *firſt book*, *De regreſſu animæ*, doth acknowledge the neceſſity of a *way* of recovering ſouls, which ſhould be univerſal. *Cum autem dicit Porphyrius, Nondum receptam unam quandam ſectam, quæ univerſalem viam animæ contineat liberandæ, ——nondumque in ſuam notitiam eandem viam hiſtoriali cognitione perlatam, proculdubio confitetur eſſe aliquam, ſed nondum in ſuam veniſſe notitiam.* But the neceſſity of the *purgation* of the ſoul in order to its *felicity*, is ſo largely and fully diſcourſed of by all the *Platoniſts* and *Pythagoreans*, that it will be needleſs to inſiſt upon it. Thus far then we find the account given of the *origin* of *evil* in Scripture to be embraced by the *ſublimeſt* of the *Heathen Philoſophers*, as moſt *rational* and *ſatisfactory*; which was the thing to be proved. 3. *Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, l.* 10. *c.* 32.

Neither do we find only the main of this account acknowledged as *rational*, but we may trace ſome not obſcure *footſteps* of the *truth* of the particular *circumſtances* which concern the *fall* of man, among the *Heathens*: ſuch as the *Devil's envying of man's happineſs, his diſguiſing himſelf under the form of a Serpent, and man's being thrown out of Paradiſe upon his fall.* *Sect.* 17.

1. *The Devil's envying the happineſs of man.* It hath been truly obſerved by a *learned man*, that the *original* of that very ancient opinion among the *Heathen*, *de invidia Dæmonis*, had its riſe from the *hiſtory* of the *fall* of *man*, which he hath made out ſo fully, that I ſhall the leſs need to prove it. And that there was an undoubted *tradition* of ſome *malignant ſpirits*, which envyed the welfare of mankind, appears by that ample *Teſtimony* of *Plutarch*, in his *Dio*, mentioned by the ſame Author; Οὐκ οἶδα, μὴ δεῖ πάνυ παλαιῶν ἢ ἀπιστάτου ἀναγκαῖον ᾠόμην λόγον, ὡς τὰ φαῦλα δαιμόνια καὶ βάσκανα, πρεσβυτέρα πῆς ἀληθοῦς ἀνθρώποις καὶ τῆς πρέξεσιν ἐπιτίμια, παρὰ D. *Caſaub.* Original of temporal evils.

χὰς ϗ φόβυς ἐπάγει, σείοντα ϗ σφάλλοντα τὴν ἀρετὴν ὡς μὴ διαμένοντες ἀπαθῶς ἐν τῷ καλῷ ϗ ἀκίνητοι, βελτίονος ἐκείνου μοίρας μὴ τὴν τελευτὴν πύθωνται. *Plutarch* was much troubled to give an account of the apparitions which *Brutus* and *Dio*, who were learned and *philoſophical* men, were haunted withall; and doubts he can give no juſt account of it, unleſs he embraced that very ancient tradition (which yet ſeemed *abſurd* and *incredible*,) viz. *That there are certain wicked and malignant Dæmons, which envy good men, and withſtand their enterprizes, by raiſing fears and troubles to them, that ſo they might hinder them in their purſuit of vertue; leſt, if they continue ſtedfaſt and unmoveable in good, they ſhould be at laſt partakers of greater felicity than they enjoy.* There being then ſo ancient a tradition of ſuch ὑβρισαὶ δαιμόνες, (as the learned man mentioned hath more fully ſhewed in his notes on this place of *Plutarch*,) gives a great confirmation to the *truth* of what the *Scripture* reports concerning the *Devil*'s being ſo great an *Inſtrument* in procuring the *fall* of *man*. To him therefore I referr the inquiſitive Reader, and ſhall not add to the *Teſtimonies* of him cited, that of *Xenocrates* in *Plutarch*, *de Iſide & Oſiride*, where he ſaith that the calamities of *life* and *misfortunes* men meet with, do not agree with that *veneration* which we have for the *Deity* and *good ſpirits*, Ἀλλ' ἴσῃ φύσις ἐν τῷ περιέχοντι μεγάλας μὲν ϗ ἰσχυρὰς δυσεργὸς ϗ ϗ σκυθρωπὰς, εὐχαίρους τοῖς τοιούτοις. *But that there are in the air ſome great and potent Beings, which are of a ſurly and malignant nature, and rejoyce to doe men all the miſchief they can.* *Iamblichus*, in his anſwer to *Porphyrius* concerning the *Ægyptian* Myſteries, undertakes to give an account of theſe evil *ſpirits* or *dæmons*, and that from them the *origin* of *evil* in the world is; for thus he ſpeaks (as he is tranſlated by *Ficinus*) *Si verum eſt quod de Idolis dicebamus, improbiſque Dæmonibus, hinc ſane exoritur multiplex origo malorum. Simulant enim Deorum præſentiam, dæmonumque bonorum, ideoque cultorem ſuum jubent eſſe juſtum, ut ipſi videantur boni, ſicut & Dii; quoniam vero natura ſunt mali, rogati mala inferre, libenter inferunt, atque nobis ad injuſta conducunt. Hi ſunt omnino qui & in oraculis mentiuntur & fallunt, & turpia conſolunt atque peragunt.* By which we ſee he acknowledgeth ſome ſpirits whoſe *natures* are *wicked*, and help men to doe evil; and that theſe very *ſpirits* may ſometimes

Plutarch. de Iſid. & Oſir. p. 361.

Iamblichus de myſter. p. 105.

sometimes command that which is *good*, lest they should be suspected, to be what they are, of a wicked and malignant Nature, which only design the *ruin* of men. By which we have a good account of whatever was commendable delivered by the *Heathen oracles*, which yet might come from the *Devil* still, by this confession of *Jamblichus* himself.

For the Devils appearing under the form of a Serpent, It is very probably conjectured, that from hence it was that the *Prince* of those who contended with *Saturn*, was by that Ænigmatical writer *Pherecydes Cyrius* called Ὀφιονεύς. *Celsus* who had so little skill in antiquity as to think that the *History* of *Moses* was as to many passages of it taken out of *Heathen Fables*, insists on this very story of *Ophioneus* as the ground-work of that *relation* in *Genesis* concerning the *Fall*. But *Origen* well answers him, ὅρα δὲ, εἰ ἐγκαλῶν ἡμῖν ὡς σφαλλομένοις ἀσυζήτατα, καὶ ἀποπλανημένοις θείων ἀνηγμάτων, αὐτὸς σαφῶς σφάλλεται; μὴ καταγνοὺς ὅτι τὰ πολλῷ ὑμῶν Ἡρακλείτου καὶ Φερεκύδου ἀρχαιότερα, ἀλλὰ καὶ Ὁμήρου, Μωϋσέως γράμματα εἰσάγει ἢ περὶ πρώτης τούτου καὶ ἐκπεσούσης ἢ ἀρείονος λόγον. *See therefore if this rare Antiquary who chargeth us with impiety in corrupting and altering the Heathen Fables, be not himself more justly chargeable with the same fault, not understanding the far greater antiquity of the writings of* Moses, *than either of* Heraclitus, *or* Pherecydes, *or* Homer *himself, which reports the story of that evil one which fell from Heaven,* ὁ γὰρ ὅφις (παρ' ὃν καὶ τὴν Φερεκύδου γέγονεν Ὀφιονεύς) αἰτιώμενος τὴν ἐκβεβηκέναι τῆς θείας ἁγνείας ἄνθρωπον τοιαῦτά τινα αἰνίσσεται, ἐπαγγελίᾳ δεινῇ καὶ μείζονων ἀπατήσας τὸν θνητὸν ὡς συνακολουθηκέναι λέγεται καὶ ὁ ἀνήρ. *For the Serpent (from which* Ophioneus *in* Pherecydes *derived his name) which was the cause why man was cast forth of* Paradise, *doth intimate some such thing, while under a pretence of Divinity, and of a better condition, he first deceived the woman, and by her means the man.* *Cælius Rhodiginus* calls this *Ophioneus Dæmonicum Serpentem, qui antesignanus fuerit agminis à Divinæ mentis placito deficientis.* This *Pherecydes*, as appears by *Eusebius*, had much converse with the *Phœnicians*; where he purposely speaks concerning this *Ophioneus*. Now the *Phœnicians*, as *Eusebius* likewise tells us, worshiped their *God* under the *Form* of a *Serpent*; which probably might be occasioned by the *Devils* ambition and *tyranny* over men,

Sect. 18. 2.

Orig. c. Celsum, lib. 6.

Antiq. lect. l. 2. *c.* 7.

Euseb. de Prap. Evang. l. 1. *cap.* 10.

that would be worshipped among them in that very *Form* wherein he had done so much mischief to the world. It was very early in the world, when the *Phœnicians* and *Ægyptians*, did begin to adore their *Gods under* the *Form* of *Serpents*, for the beginning of it is attributed to *Taautus* by *Eusebius*, ἢ μὲν ἴυγξ τῷ Δρόμῳ φύσιν καὶ τὴν ὄψιν αὐτὸς ἐξεδείξατο ὁ Τάαυτος καὶ μετ' αὐτὸν αὖθις Φοινικές τε καὶ Αἰγύπτιοι. Neither was this only among the *Phœnicians* and *Ægyptians*, but where-ever the *Devil* reigned, the *Serpent* was had in some peculiar veneration: thence *Justin Martyr* saith, ὅθεν πάντι νομιζομένων παρ' ὑμῖν θεῶν ὄφις σύμβολον μέγα καὶ μυστήριον ἀναγράφεται· *the Serpent was the Symbol of adoration among them*; and was the proper *Indicium*, or *note* of a *consecrated place*, as is evident by that of *Persius*.

Apolog. 2.

Satyr. 1. *Pinge duos angues; pueri, sacer est locus.*

Thence the *Scholiast* on *Aristophanes* on that place in *Plutus*, ἐξηξάτλω τὸν Διὸς δρόμον· ἐπὶ τῆς νεώ, observes κοινῶς πᾶσι τοῖς ἥρωσι δρόμους παρεπέθεντο, so that where-ever any *God* or *Hero* was to be worshipped, there were *Serpents* painted to denote so much. So *Orus Apollo* saith of the *Ægyptians*, ὃ βαῖον ὁ ὄφις ἑλλωσὶ βασίλισκον χρυσοῦν περιτιθέασι τοῖς θεοῖς, *they were wont to put the form of a golden Basilisk to their Gods*. *Heinsius* conceives that the first worship of *Apollo* at *Delphi* was under the form of a *Serpent*, whither *Nonnus* tells us that *Cadmus* the *Phœnician* went upon his first coming into *Bœotia*, and from hence he derives the name *Pytho* from the Hebrew פתן which signifies a *Serpent*. *Ut non dubitandum sit*, saith he, *quin Pythius Apollo, hoc est, Spurcus ille spiritus, quem Hebræi Ob & Abaddon, Hellenistæ ad verbum,* Ἀπολλύωνα, *cæteri* Ἀπόλλωνα *dixerunt, sub hac forma qua miseriam humano generi invexit, primo cultus sit in Græcia.* And which is further observable, the Devil was always ambitious to have the world think that the *knowledge of good and evil* was to come by the *Serpent* still; thence the famous *oracle* of *Apollo* here at *Delphi*; thence came the use of *Serpents* so much in *Divination*, thence נחש signifies to *divine*, from נחש a *Serpent*; and so among the *Greeks* ὀιωνοὶ ζωὰι, is taken in the same sence, from ὀιωνὸς a *Serpent*. So that *excellent Glossographer Hesychius*; ὀιωνὸς, ὄφις·

Heinsi. Aristarch. p. 18. *ed.* 1627.

ὄφις δαιμονᾶς λέγονται εἰς τὰς μαντείας τὰς ὄψεις ἔχειν ὧν ἡ ὀπισθὶς ἔλεγον.
The *Serpent* was reckoned among the *pedestria auspicia* by the *Romans*; and *Homer* tells in that solemn *divination* concerning the *Greeks* success at *Troy* there appears,

Ἰλιαδ. β'.

Δράκων δὲ νῶτα φάρυγος.

Which saith *Heinsius*, is an exact description of the *Nachas*; whom they would have so called from the marks on his back, which they accurately observed in *divination*. Thus we see how careful the *Devil* was to advance his honour in the world under that *Form*, wherein he had deceived mankind into so much folly and misery.

3. We meet with some remainders of man's being cast out of *Paradise*, upon his *fall* among the *Heathens*. *Origen* thinks that *Plato* by his converse with the *Jews* in *Ægypt*, did understand the *History* of the *fall* of *man*, which he after his way *ænigmatically* describes in his *Symposiacks*. Where he brings in *Porus the God of plenty feasting with the rest of the Gods*; *after supper* Penia *comes a begging to the door*; Porus *being drunk with Nectar, goes into* Jupiter's *garden, and there falls asleep*; Penia *observing it, steals to him, and by this deceit conceived by him*. In this *Fable* of *Plato*, *Origen* takes notice what a near resemblance the *garden* of *Jupiter* hath to *Paradise*, *Penia* to the *Serpent* which circumvented *Adam*, and *Porus* to man who was deceived by the Serpent. Which he conceives more probable because of *Plato* his custom, τὰ μεγάλα ἑαυτοῦ φαινόμενα δόγματα κρύπτειν μὲν διὰ τὰς πολλὰς ἐν τῷ τοιούτῳ σχήματι, *to wrap up those excellent things he knew under some fables because of the vulgar*; for which he after speaks of his custom in *altering* and *disguising* what he had from the *Jews*, lest he should too much displease the *fabulous Greeks*, if he should adhere too close to the *Jews*, who were so infamous among them. Some have thought the *story* of *Paradise* was preserved among the *Heathens* in the *fable* of the *gardens* of *Adonis* which comes near that of *Eden*; but what footsteps may be gathered of the truth of Scripture-history in the *Heathen Mythology*, will appear afterwards. Thus much here then may serve to have manifested the account which the Scripture gives of the *Origin* of *evil* by the

Origen. c. Cels. l. 4. p. 189.

fall of man to be in its self rational, and attested by the consent of such Persons who cannot be suspected of any partiality to the Scriptures.

Sect. 20. We come now to consider the other grand difficulty which concerns the *Origin* of *evil*, and the *truth* of *Divine providence* together. Which is, that if *sin* be the cause of *misery*, and there be a *God* which governs the world; *whence comes it to pass, that the worst of men do so frequently escape sufferings, and the best do so commonly undergo them?* This hath been in all ages of the world where men have been Philosophical and inquisitive, one of the great *inquiries* which the minds of men have been perplexed about. The true and full *resolution* of which question, depends much upon those *grounds* and *principles* which are discovered to us by *Divine revelation* in the *Scriptures*, concerning the *grounds* of *God's patience* towards wicked men, the nature and end of *sufferings* which good men are exercised with. And certainly this should very much commend the *Scriptures* to all sober and inquisitive persons, that they contain in them the most clear and certain grounds of satisfaction to the minds of men, in such things wherein they are otherwise so irresolved? But of that afterwards? Our present business is to give an account of this difficulty from *natural reason*, which will be most satisfactorily done by the producing those grounds from which they have resolved this question, *cur malis bene, & bonis male*, who either have not had, or at least owned any thing of *Divine revelation*. I begin with that which doth concern the *prosperity* and *impunity* of *wicked men*, which men have with more confidence insisted on on this account, because all men could not but understand a general reason of *sufferings*, by reason there were none whose *consciences* could wholly acquit them of *evil actions*; but why persons notoriously *wicked* should live in *impunity*, when others *suffer*, that they were unable to give an account of. And this was the common pretence of *Atheism*, as *Simplicius* tells us,

Comment. in Epictet. c. 38. *p.* 223. συμβαίνει δέ πως καὶ διὰ τὸ ἀναπολίκλως πιστεύειν, καὶ διὰ τὸ ὁρᾶν ποτὲ μὲν ἀγαθὸς δυσχεροῦντας, ποτὲ δὲ κακὸς ἐν ἑαυτῆς εὐφρεσύνας, ὀλιγωρεῖν ὧν ἔχουσι σοφιῶν, καὶ χώραν διδόναι τῇ τραγῳδίᾳ λέγειν.

Τολμῶ

Τολμῶ κατειπεῖν μήποτ' ὢν εἶναι θεοὺς
Κακοὶ γὰρ εὐτυχοῦντες ἐξαλλήξουσί μου.

It comes to paſs, that ſuch who have no grounded belief of a Deity, when they obſerve the miſeries of good men, and the tranquillity and felicity of bad men, they regard not the common notions they have of a Deity, and are ready to cry out with the Tragœdian (or rather of *Ariſtophanes* in his *Plutus.*)

Shall I not dare to ſay there are no Gods,
When thoſe do proſper who have injured me?

And it is obſervable, that the moſt of thoſe who have taken occaſion amongſt the *Heathens* to queſtion *providence*, have done it upon ſome remarkable *injury* which they have conceived to be done to themſelves, and ſo we have ground to think that it was more *paſſion* and *intereſt*, than any clear *reaſon* which was the inducement to it. So *Diagoras* reſolves to ſet up for an *Atheiſt*, becauſe the perjured perſon was not ſtruck dead in the place.

And *Jaſon* in *Seneca* when he ſees *Medea* fly away after killing his children, cries out,

Teſtare nullos eſſe qua veheris Deos.

Thou tell'ſt the world there are no Gods that way
Where thou doſt fly.

And ſo *Claudian*, who largely reaſons the caſe on both ſides, for providence and againſt it, at laſt tells us what it was which was the main cauſe of his doubts, *viz.* the long impunity of *Rufinus.*

Abſtulit hunc tandem Rufini pœna tumultum
Abſolvitque Deos.

Rufinus *death doth clear the Gods, and ſet*
My mind at eaſe.

But

Tully l. 3. de Nat. Deor.

But becauſe ſome carry it higher, as *Cotta* in *Tully*, who reaſons the moſt (as became a *States-man*) in reference to ſuch perſons who had been *uſeful* or *hurtful* to *Common-wealths*, we may ſuppoſe there might be ſomewhat more of *reaſon* than *Intereſt* in ſuch argumentations; and yet even in thoſe *diſcourſes* we may ſtill find that the main *original* of this quarrel againſt *providence*, was an over-high *eſteem* of themſelves, that they thought they *deſerved* better from the *Gods*, than to receive ſuch injuries, or undergo ſuch calamities. Therefore *Cotta* cries out on *Providence*, becauſe ſuch perſons who were *uſeful* to the *Roman Common-wealth*, were deſtroyed, when the enemies to it eſcaped, as though *providence* had been onely a *Tutelar Deity* of *Rome*, and had nothing to do elſewhere. Thence he cries out, if there be *providence*, why were the two *Scipio's* deſtroyed in *Spain* by the *Carthaginians*? Why was *Maximus* killed by *Hannibal*? Why were the *Romans* with *Paulus* ruined at *Cannæ*? Why did *Regulus* undergo ſo much cruelty by the *Carthaginians*? Why did not *Africanus* die in his own bed? Nay, ſaith he, to come nearer home, why is my Uncle *Rutilius* in baniſhment? Why was my friend *Druſus* killed in his own houſe? On the other ſide, why did *Marius* die in peace, and the moſt cruel *Cinna* enjoy ſo long tranquillity? with many other inſtances of both ſorts. But this is it which I take notice of theſe for, becauſe we hereby ſee how common it is for men to queſtion providence, more out of *Paſſion* and *Intereſt*, than out of any ſolid grounds of reaſon.

Sect. 21. Let us therefore appeal from perſons who were particularly engaged by ſome private *intereſt* in thoſe paſſages, from whence they would inferr that there was no *providence*, to ſuch who *ſtood* by unconcerned, and made *uſe* of the free dictates of their *reaſon* in theſe caſes. And ſuch perſons when they come to *reaſon* the *caſe* like *Philoſophers*, and men out of *paſſion*, have given *ſatisfactory* and *rational accounts* why *God* in his wiſe *providence* may ſometimes ſuffer the *worſt* of *men*, to go on in *impunity*, when *good men* may go through the *troubles* of this *world*. As,

1. *God forbears wicked men, to propound the example of his goodneſs to their imitation, to teach them not to revenge their injuries too greedily on each other.* This *Plutarch*, in that admirable

mirable discourse of his on this *subject*, insists on as his *first reason*, why *God* doth not presently punish wicked men. For, saith he out of *Plato*, *God hath set forth himself in the midst of the world for our imitation*; *and true vertue is nothing else but an imitation of the Divine nature. And therefore God*, saith *Plato*, *gave man the use of sight, that by the sight of the heavenly bodies, and the exact motions, which are in them, men should learn* τὸ εὔτακτον καὶ τεταγμένον, *that which was comely and orderly, and hate all disorderly and irregular motions*; *For as he excellently speaks*: ὑ γὰς ἔστιν ὅ, τι μεῖζον ἀνθρώπῳ ἀπολαῦσιν θεοῦ πέφυκεν ἢ τὸ μιμήσεως, καὶ διόξει θεὸν ἐν ἑαυτῷ καλῶν καὶ ἀγαθῶν εἰς ἀξιαν καθίσασθαι. *There is no greater benefit man can receive from God, than to attain true vertue by the imitation and pursuit of those perfections which are in him.* And thence, saith *Plutarch*, *God* forbears to punish *wicked* men presently, not lest if he should punish them he might do that he would repent of afterwards, ἀλλ' ἡμῶν τὸ περὶ τὰς τιμωρίας θυμοῦς καὶ λάβρον ἀφαιρῶν, *but that he might take away the fury and violence of men in revenging their injuries on each other*, that they should not do it in wrath and anger, with as much eagerness as they *satisfie* their hunger and thirst, whereby they do, ἐπηπεδᾶν τοῖς λελυπηκόσιν, *leap upon them who have injured them*, with as much fury as a wild beast upon his prey; but men should learn to imitate τὴν ἐκείνου πραότητα καὶ μέλλησιν, *God's gentleness and patience*, whereby he gives the offender time to consider with himself what he hath done, before he doth severely punish him. As *Plato* when his Boy had angred him, stood still a while without striking him, τὸν θυμὸν κολάζων, as he said, *punishing himself first for his anger*, before he would chastise the Boy for his fault; and *Archytas* when he saw how negligent his workmen had been, and began to be very angry with them, told them, ἐυτυχεῖτε ὅτι ὀργίζομαι ὑμῖν, *It is well for you that I am angry with you*. Now saith *Plutarch*, if the consideration of this forbearance in men should tend to moderate mens heat and violence, how much more should the consideration of the *lenity* and *patience* of *God*, do it! καὶ θεῖον ἡγεῖσθαι μίμημα ἀφειῆς τὸ πραότητα καὶ τὴν μεγαλοψυχίαν *and to account gentleness and forbearance to be an imitation of divine perfections*. Now what can be more *rational* and *agreeable* to our apprehensions of a *divine nature* than

Plutarch de his qui sero puniuntur à numine. p. 550. ed. Fr.

than this is, that he ſhould ſhew his goodneſs to all, and by his *forbearance* of ſo many, teach the world more meekneſs and gentleneſs towards each other? For if *offences* riſe by the *quality* of the *perſon* againſt whom they are committed, no injuries can be ſo great in one man to another, as thoſe *affronts* are men put *upon God* by their continual *provocations* of him. And if *God* then be of ſo infinite patience to forbear ſuch who have offended him, what juſtice and reaſon is there, but that men ſhould expreſs more lenity and patience towards each other? So *Hierocles* excellently ſpeaks, μιμεῖται ὁ ἐν τοῖς φιλίας μέτροις τὸν Θεὸν, ὃς μισεῖ μὲν οὐδένα ἀνθρώπων, τὸ δὲ τῆς φιλανθρωπίας ἀγαθὸν κοινῷ πᾶσι γένει παρατείνων. *A good man imitates God in the meaſures of friendſhip, who hates no man, and extends his loving kindneſs to all mankind.* Of which *Seneca* likewiſe ſomewhere ſpeaks. *Ne Deos quidem immortales ab hac tam effuſa benignitate ſacrilegi negligenteſque eorum deterrent; utuntur natura ſua, & cuncta, interque illa ipſos munerum ſuorum malos interpretes, juvant.* *The Divine Benignity extends its ſelf to all, even to ſuch as affront and diſhonour them, and abuſe the gifts they beſtow upon them.* And ſince there is ſo much *truth* and *reaſon* in that of *Plato* πλὴν τὸ ἀγαθὸν τὸ ὁμοιοῦσθαι Θεῷ, *It is the height of goodneſs to be like to God*, we ſee what excellent *reaſon* there is for that command of our *Saviour*, *Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward* Luk. 6. 35,36. *ſhall be great, and ye ſhall be the children of the higheſt; for he is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father is merciful.*

2. *God forbears preſently to puniſh wicked men, to give them time to become better.* This the ſame excellent *Moraliſt* gives as another account of *God's patience*, that thereby he gives them χρόνον πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν. *a ſpace to repent*, as the *Scripture* call it. *For men*, ſaith *Plutarch*, *in their puniſhments* Plutarch. p. 551. *look at nothing further than mere ſatisfying their revenge and malice, and that makes them purſue thoſe that have offended* Rev. 2. 21. *them with ſo much rage and eagerneſs; but God*, ſaith he, *aims at the cure of thoſe who are not utterly incurable*, to ſuch he gives, μεταβαλλέσθαι χρόνον, *a time to reform in*. Here he brings in the examples of ſuch who were bad at firſt, and came afterwards to be changed from what they were; for which he inſtances

instances in *Cecrops*, who was thence called Διφυὴς, because from a cruel severe *Prince*, he became gentle and mild; and so *Gelon* and *Hieron* of *Sicily*, and *Pisistratus* the Son of *Hippocrates*, who, from being *Usurpers*, became excellent *Princes*. If *Miltiades*, saith he, had been cut off while he acted the part of a *Tyrant*, or *Cimon* in his *Incest*, or *Themistocles* in his *Debaucheries*, what had become of *Marathon*, *Eurymedon*, *Dianium*, by which the *Athenians* got so great *glory* and *liberty*? and as he well observes, ἀδὲν γὰρ αἱ μεγάλαι φύσεις μικρὸν ἐκφέρουσιν, *Great Spirits doe nothing mean*; ἀλλ' ἀργῷ δ' ὀξύτης τὸ σφοδρὸν ἐν αὐταῖς καὶ δεκτικὸν, ἀλλ' ἐν σάλῳ διαφέρεσθαι ποιεῖ εἰς τὸ μόνιμον καὶ καθεκτικὸς ἦθος ἐλθεῖν. *That sharp and active spirit that is in them can never lie at rest by reason of its vigour, but they are tossed up and down, as it were in a Tempest, till they come to a settled composed life.* But as the multitude of *weeds* argues the richness and softness of the ground, though for the sake of those weeds one not skill'd in husbandry would not account such ground worth looking after; so, saith he, ἄπτα πολλὰ καὶ φαῦλα προεξανθοῦσιν αἱ μεγάλαι φύσεις· *great spirits usually bring forth no commendable fruits at first; which we considering the danger and hurtfulness of, are presently for cutting them down; but one that more wisely considers the generous nature which may lie under this ill fruit, waits time and leisure, till reason and age begin to master these head-strong passions.* And therefore according to the prudent Law of the *Ægyptians*, *the woman with child must be reprieved till the time of her delivery.*

3. *God spares some wicked men from punishment to make them instruments of his justice in punishing others.* Ἐνίοις γὰρ ἀμέλει καὶ κολασεῖς ἐπέγουν πονηρῶν, οἷς δημοκοίνοις, ὠπτχείσατο τὸ δαιμόνιον, as *Plutarch* goes on, *God spares some from punishment, that by them he might punish others.* Which he supposeth to be the case of all *Tyrants*; and thereby *Cotta*'s difficulty concerning *Marius*, *Cinna*, *Sylla*, and those other cruel and *tyrannical* persons, who had usurped authority among them, is clearly taken off: For *Divine Providence* might let those *Trees* grow from whence he intended to take his *Rods* to scourge others withall. *God* makes the same *use* of *Tyrants* (saith *Plutarch*) to *Common-wealths*, that *Physicians* do of the *gall* of a *Hyæna* and other hurtful creatures; which may be good

for curing some dangerous diseases; so may the *Tyrannical severity* and *sharpness* of such persons be continued ἢ τὸ νοσῶν ἀπαλλάξαι ἢ κολάσαι, *till the diseases of the political body be cured by these sharp medicines.* Such a one was *Phalaris* to the *Agrigentines*, and *Marius* to the *Romans*: and the *Oracle* told the *Sicyonians* in express terms, μαστιγούων δεῖσθαι τὴν πόλιν· *the City wanted some severe discipline.* Thence *Totilas*, when he found what strange success he had in his enterprises, called himself *Flagellum Dei*, and thought *God* raised him up on purpose to be a *scourge* for the *sins* of the world. And no doubt those strange passages of the *Roman Common-wealth* (which made *Cato* at least dispute *providence*, and say, *res divinas multum habere caliginis*, when he saw *Pompey successfull* as long as he served his *ambition*, but presently *overthrown* when he stood for the *Common-wealth*) these things, I say, had a higher *end* than they looked at, which was to make both *Pompey* and *Cæsar* the *instruments* of *Divine justice* to punish the *Romans* for their *lusts*, *ambition* and *cruelty*, which were never greater than in that Age. Now then, if *God* must justly punish Offenders, why may he not spare some to make them his *instruments* in the *punishing* of others, especially since after he hath used his *rods*, he may cast them into the *fire* too? as was evident in the *instance* of *Cæsar*, who, after all his *slaughters* and triumphs, was murthered in the *Senate*, and that by some who had been as *active* as any for him. And herein Divine Justice, both as to the punishment of the persons, and the means of it, hath been very remarkable in multitudes of *instances*, which every ones reading may afford him.

4 Therefore, another account why *God* may spare wicked men a great while, is, *That divine providence might more remarkably be observed in the manner of their punishment afterwards. Plutarch* tells us of *Callippus*, who was *stabb'd* by his enemies with the same *dagger* with which he had killed *Dion* under a pretence of friendship. And when *Mitius* the *Argive* was killed in a tumult, afterwards, upon the day of a solemn shew, a *brass Statue* in the market place fell upon his *murtherer*, and killed him there. But most remarkable is the story of *Belsus* recorded by the same Author, who having killed his *Father*, and a long time concealed it, goes one night to

to ſupper to ſome *Friends*, and while he was there, thruſts up his ſpear into a *Swallow's* neſt, and pulls it down, and kills the young ones; his *Friends* asking him the reaſon of ſo ſtrange an action: Οὐ γὰρ (ἔφη) μοῦ πάλαι κατηγοροῦσιν αὗται ψευδῶς καὶ κατηβοῶσιν, ὡς ἀπεκτονότος τὸν πατέρα. *Do not you hear*, ſaith he, *how they falſly accuſe me, and cry out, that I have killed my Father?* Which being by the perſons preſent carried to the *King*, and the truth of it found out, he was executed for it. Such ſtrange ways doth *providence* ſometimes uſe to ſhew how vigilant it is, even when we think it ſleeps the moſt.

5. *Though God ſpares the perſons of wicked men, he doth not deferr their puniſhment*, when the thoughts of their evil actions is the greateſt torment to them; *Maxima peccati pœna eſt, peccaſſe*, as *Seneca* ſpeaks. Sin bears its own puniſhment along with it. Wickedneſs is δεινὴ τῆς βίου δημιουργὸς οἰκίσεως, *the moſt exquiſite contriver of miſery*, which fills the minds of thoſe who commit it with continual conſternations, anxieties and perplexities of mind. But as that often and deſervedly cited Author on this ſubject, *Plutarch* tells us, moſt men are in this like *Children*, who when they behold malefactors in the *Theatres* in their cloth of *gold*, and purple robes, with their crowns on their heads dancing about, they admire them, and imagine them to be moſt happy men, till they ſee them *laſhed* and *beaten*, and *fire* come out from their brave apparel; ſo ſaith he, as long as men ſee others in their pomp and grandeur, they think them far from puniſhment, till they behold their *execution*, which, ſaith he, is not ſo much the *entrance* of their *puniſhment*, as the *perfection* of it. So that the *longer* the *time* of their *lives* is, the longer is the *time* of their *puniſhment* here; οὐδὲ γηράσαντες ἐκολάσθησαν, ἀλλ' ἐτελέσαντο κολαζόμενοι· *they are not puniſhed when they grow old, but they are grown old in puniſhments.* Cannot we ſay a perſon is *puniſhed* while he is in *priſon* and hath his *fetters* upon him, till his *execution* comes? nor that one that hath drunk *poiſon*, is a dying while he walks about till the cold comes to his heart, and kills him? *if we deny*, ſaith he, *that all the inquietudes, horrors and anxieties of mind which wicked men have, are no part of their puniſhment, we may as well ſay that a fiſh which hath ſwallowed the hook is not taken, becauſe he is not fryed, or cut in pieces.* So it is with every wicked man, he hath ſwallowed the *hook* when he

hath committed an evil action (τὸ γλυκὺ τ ἀδικίας ἄσπερ λίπας ἐνδὺς ἔζεσίδρυκε) and this *conſcience* within him, as he expreſſeth it,

Θύννε· βολαῖς πέλαγος ὡς διατρέβεις.

Iſa. 57. 21. Which in the Prophet's expreſſion is, *the wicked are like a troubled Sea, which caſts forth nothing but mire and dirt.* As *Apollodorus* dreamt, that he was flead and boyled by the *Scythians*, and that his heart ſpake to him out of the Cauldron, Ἐγώ σοι τῶν πάντων αἰτία, *I am the cauſe of all this.* God deals by wicked men, as *Caligula* was wont to ſay of thoſe he commanded to be executed, *ferit ut ſentiant ſe mori*, he ſo puniſhes them, as to make them ſenſible of their puniſhments. And as *Tacitus* ſpeaks of cruel and wicked perſons, *quorum mentes ſi recludantur, poſſint aſpici laniatus & ictus; quando ut corpora verberibus, ita ſævitia, libidine, malis conſultis animus dilaceretur.* Wickedneſs is the only *fury* which continually *haunts* and *laſhes* thoſe who delight in it, and leaves ſtill behind it αἰσχρὰ καὶ φοβερὰ πάθη, *loathſome and terrible perturbations*, ſecret gripings of Conſcience and ſelf-condemning thoughts for their folly and wickedneſs; like *Lyſimachus*, who for extreme thirſt offered his *Kingdom* to the *Getæ* to quench it, which when he had done, φεῦ τ ἐμῆς κακίας, ὃς δι' ὀλίγου ὕδατος βραχεῖαν, ἐστέρημαι βασιλείας πλικαύτης. *What a wretch was I* (ſaith he) *to loſe ſuch a Kingdom for ſo ſhort a pleaſure!* And though wicked men be not ſenſible of the loſs of a far more glorious *Kingdom* than this of *Lyſimachus*, viz. *that of Heaven*, yet they cannot but be ſenſible how much they have loſt that *Kingdom* which every *good man* hath in the *tranquillity* of his *ſpirit*, and the *command* of his *paſſions*.

6. *The time that God ſpares wicked men, is not ſo long as we think for.* It is all one, as *Plutarch* ſaith, as if we ſhould complain, that the *malefactor* was puniſhed in the *evening*, and not in the *morning*; *God's forbearance* is but for a very little time, compared with his own *duration*. We meaſure *God* by the ſhort *hour-glaſs* of our own *time*, when we are ſo ready to confine him to our *meaſures*. The time ſeems long to us, but it is as nothing in it ſelf: ἐπεὶ πῖς τε θεοῖς πᾶν ἀνθρωπίνου βίου διάστημα, τὸ μηδὲν ὄζι· *the whole life of man compared with eternity is nothing.* Beſides, all this time *God* ſuffers wicked

wicked men to live here, he hath them under safe *custody*; he doth but let them take the *air* within the *prison-walls*, or it may be they may play and sport themselves there, but there is *no possibility* of escaping out of the hands of *Divine Justice*.

7. *God forbears wicked men here, because the time is to come wherein God intends to punish them.* This is the highest *vindication* of *Divine Providence* as to the present impunity of wicked men in the world, because this is not the proper season for the open *execution* of *Justice*. There are but few in comparison whom *Justice* causeth to be *executed* in the *prison*, of what are reserved for the *general Assizes*; *God* reserves them for a *fair* and *open* trial, for the greater vindication of his *honour*, and manifestation of his *Justice* to the world. And although *God's judgments* even in this world be sometimes so remarkable, that we cannot but see a hand of *Providence* in them, yet they are but few whom *God* doth so remarkably punish here, to make us more firmly believe a day of *Judgment* to come. Which though it be most clearly and fully revealed in *Scripture*, yet the *Heathens* themselves from mere *reason* have had such a *persuasion* of it, that they have given this as another great reason, why *God* did forbear to punish wicked men here, because he did reserve them for future punishment. For, as the same *Moralist* speaks in the same discourse concerning the Soul, ἀγωνίζεσθαι γὰρ ὥσπερ ἀθλητὴς καὶ τοῦτο τὸ ζῆν, ὅταν δὲ διαγωνίζεσθαι τότε τυγχάνῃ τοῦ προσκόπτοντος, *this present life is the place of the soul's combate, which when it hath finished, it then receives according to its performance of it.* And as he before speaks, Εἰς ὃν λόγον ὁ τῆς διοικήσεως τὴν προνοίαν ἅμα καὶ διαμονὴν τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ψυχῆς βεβαιῶν, καὶ διατείνων εἰς τὴν ἀπολιπῶν, ἀναιρεῖται διάτεχνον. *The same reason which confirms providence, doth likewise confirm the immortality of the soul; and if one be taken away, the other follows.* Οὕτω δὲ τῇ ψυχῇ μὴ τὴν τε τελευτὴν, μᾶλλον εἰκὸς ὃτι καὶ τιμὰς ἀποδιδόσθαι καὶ τιμωρίας. *And if the soul doth subsist after death, it stands to the greatest reason, that it should there receive either reward or punishment.* Thus we see how far natural light, and moral reason will carry men in the vindicating of *Divine Providence*, as to the present impunity of wicked men. *Plut. p. 562.*

The other part which concerns the *sufferings of good men* is not of so great difficulty, because there are none so good as not *Sect. 22.*

to

to have a *mixture* of *evil* in them, and as they have a *mixture* of *evil*, ſo they have but a *mixture* of *puniſhment*; none lying under ſo great *miſeries* here, but withall they have ſome *ſhare* in the *comforts* of this life. And therefore it is leſs wonder, that this part of *Divine Providence* which concerns the *ſufferings of good men*, hath not wanted ſome among the *Heathen Moraliſts* who have made it their deſign to vindicate it; which ſetting aſide what *Simplicius* on *Epictetus*, and many others have done, is fully performed by *Seneca* in his tract on this very ſubject, *cur bonis male ſit, cum ſit Providentia* (as *Muretus* reſtores the title of that book) wherein theſe following accounts are given of it.

1. *God brings them up as his children under ſharp diſcipline for their future benefit.* A good man in *Seneca*'s language is, *diſcipulus Dei, æmulatorque, & vera progenies:* which in the language of the *Scripture*, is, *one taught of God, a follower of God, and one born of him.* Now, ſaith he, *Parens ille magnificus, virtutum non lenis exactor, ſicut ſeveri patres, durius educat. God, who is the great Father of good men, keeps them under diſcipline while under age, and by hardſhip fits them for the practice of vertue.* Thence he bids us take notice of the different *indulgence* of *Fathers* and *Mothers* to their *Children*; the *Father* he haſtens them to School, ſuffers them not to be idle on their play-days, makes them toil, and ſometimes cry; the *Mother* ſhe is all for holding them in her lap, keeping them out of the Sun, and from catching cold, would not willingly have them either cry or take pains. *Patrium habet Deus adverſus bonos animum, & illos fortius amat. God bears the indulgence of a Father towards his children, and loves them with greater ſeverity.* *Senec. de Provid. c. 1.*

2. *Good men receive benefit by their ſufferings*; *quicquid evenit in ſuum colorem trahit*, ſaith *Seneca* of a good man, which in the language of the *Apoſtle* is, *every thing works together for his good. The Sea loſeth nothing*, ſaith he, *of its ſaltneſs by the rivers running into it, neither doth a good man by the current of his ſufferings.* And of all benefits which he receives, that of the exerciſe and *trial* of his vertue and *patience* is moſt diſcernable. *Marcet ſine adverſario virtus*; as ſoon as *Carthage* was deſtroyed, *Rome* fell to *Luxury: True wreſtlers deſire to have ſome to try their ſtrength upon them*; *cui non induſtrio*

dustrio otium pœna est? an active spirit hates idleness and cowardise; for *etiamsi ceciderit, de genu pugnat, though his legs be cut off, he will fight on his knees.*

3. *It redounds to God's honour, when good men bear up under sufferings. Ecce par Deo dignum vir fortis cum mala fortuna compositus.* It is a spectacle *God* delights to see, a good man combate with calamities. *God* doth in *Seneca's* phrase *quosdam fastidio transire*, passeth them by in a slight; *an old wrestler scorns to contend with a coward, one who is vinci paratus*, ready to yield up presently. *Calamitates sub jugum mittere proprium magni viri est*, it argues a noble spirit to be able to subdue miseries.

4. *It tends to the trial and increase of their strength. Seneca* highly extols that speech of the *Philosopher Demetrius*, *Nihil infelicius eo cui nihil unquam evenit adversi; non licuit enim illi se experiri.* He is the most unhappy man who never knew what misery meant; for he could never know what he was able to bear. And, as he saith; to pass ones life away *sine morsu animi*, without any trouble, it is *ignorare rerum naturæ alteram partem*, not to know what is upon the *reverse* of nature. *Idem licet fecerint qui integri revertuntur ex acie, magis spectatur qui saucius redit.* Though he that comes home sound, might fight as well as he that is wounded; yet the wounded person hath the more pity, and is most cryed up for his valour. The *Pilot* is seen in a *tempest*, a *Soldier* in *battel*, and a *good man* in *sufferings*. *God* doth by such as *Masters* doe by *Scholars*, *qui plus laboris ab his exigunt, quibus certior spes est*: who set the *best* wits the *hardest tasks.*

5. *God exerciseth good men with sufferings, to discover the indifferency of those things which men value so much in the world, when he denies them to good men.* Blindness would be hatefull, if none were blind but such whose eyes were put out; and therefore *Appius* and *Metellus* were blind. *Riches* are no good things, therefore the *worst* as well as the *best* have them. *Nullo modo magis potest Deus concupita traducere, quam si illa ad turpissimos defert, ab optimis abigit. God* could not traduce or defame those things more which men desire so much, than by taking them away from the best of men, and giving them to the worst.

6. That

6. That they might be *examples* to others of *patience* and *conſtancy*; For, as *Seneca* concludes, *nati ſunt in exemplar*, they are born to be *patterns* to others. If to theſe things we add what the *Word* of *God* diſcovers concerning the *nature*, *grounds*, and *ends* of *afflictions*, and that *glory* which ſhall be *revealed*, in compariſon with *which exceeding weight of glory*, *theſe light and momentany afflictions are not at all to be valued*, then we have a clear and full *vindication* of *Divine Providence*, as to the *ſufferings* of good men, as well as to the *Impunity* of ſuch as are *wicked*. But however, from hence we ſee how far the mere *light* of *reaſon* hath carried men in *reſolving* theſe *difficulties* concerning *God's Providence* in the world, and what a *rational account* may be given of them, ſuppoſing *evil* of *puniſhment* to ariſe from *ſin*, and that there is a *God* in the world, who is ready to puniſh the *wicked*, and to *reward* the *good*: Which was the thing to be ſhewed.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Origin of Nations.

All mankind derived from Adam, *if the Scriptures be true. The contrary supposition an introduction to Atheism. The truth of the History of the Flood. The possibility of an universal deluge proved. The Flood universal as to mankind, whether universal as to the Earth and Animals; no necessity of asserting either. Yet supposing the possibility of it demonstrated without creation of new waters. Of the Fountains of the deep. The proportion which the height of Mountains bears to the Diameter of the Earth. No Mountains much above three mile perpendicular. Of the Origin of Fountains. The opinion of* Aristotle *and others concerning it discussed. The true account of them from the vapours arising from the mass of subterraneous waters. Of the Capacity of the Ark for receiving the Animals, from* Buteo *and others. The truth of the deluge from the Testimony of Heathen Nations. Of the propagation of Nations from* Noah's *posterity. Of the beginning of the* Assyrian *Empire. The multiplication of mankind after the Flood. Of the Chronology of the LXX. Of the time between the Flood and* Abraham, *and the advantages of it. Of the pretence of such Nations, who called themselves Aborigines. A discourse concerning the first Plantation of* Greece, *the common opinion propounded and rejected. The* Hellens *not the first Inhabitants of* Greece, *but the* Pelasgi. *The large spread of them over the parts of* Greece; *Of their language different from the* Greeks. *Whence these* Pelasgi *came; that* Phaleg *was the* Pelasgus *of* Greece, *and the leader of that Colony, proved from* Epiphanius: *the language of the* Pelasgi *in* Greece *Oriental: thence an account given of the many Hebrew words in the Greek language, and the remainders of the Eastern languages in the Islands of* Greece, *both which not from the* Phœnicians *as* Bochartus *thinks, but from the old* Pelasgi. *Of the ground of the affinity between the* Jews *and* Lacedæmonians. *Of the peopling of* America.

THE next thing we proceed to give a rational account of, in the History of the first *ages* of the World contained in *Scripture*, is the peopling of the World from *Adam*. Which *Sect.* 1.

is of great consequence for us to understand not only for the satisfaction of our curiosity as to the true *Origin* of *Nations*, but also in order to our believing the *truth* of the *Scriptures*, and the universal effects of the fall of man. Neither of which can be sufficiently cleared without this. For as it is hard to conceive how the effects of man's fall should extend to all mankind, unless all mankind were propagated from *Adam*; so it is unconceivable how the account of things given in *Scripture* should be true, if there were persons existent in the World long before *Adam* was. Since the *Scripture* doth so plainly affirm, *that God hath made of one blood all Nations of men, for to dwell on the face of the earth*; Some *Greek copies* read it ἐξ ἑνὸς, leaving out αἵματος which the *vulgar Latin* follows: the *Arabick version* to explain both, reads it *ex homine*, or as *De Dieu* renders it *ex Adamo uno*, there being but the difference of one letter in the *Eastern languages* between דם and אדם, the one denoting *blood* and the other *man*. But if we take it as our more ordinary copies read it ἐξ ἑνὸς αἵματος, yet thereby it is plain, that the meaning is not that all *mankind* was made of the same *uniform matter*, as the Authour of the *Pre-Adamites* weakly imagined, (for by that reason, not only mankind but the whole World might be said to be ἐξ ἑνὸς αἵματος of the same blood, since all things in the World were at first formed out of the same matter,) but αἷμα is taken there in the sence in which it occurrs in the best *Greek* Authours, for the stock out of which men come: So *Homer*,

Act. 17. 26.

Odyss. π. Εἰ ἐτεόν γ' ἐμὸς ἐσσὶ καὶ αἵματος ἠδὲ τοκήων.

Thence those who are near relations, are called in *Sophocles*, οἱ πρὸς αἵματος; Thence the name of *Consanguinity* for nearness of relation; and *Virgil* useth *sanguis* in the same sence,

Trojano à sanguine duci.

So that the *Apostles* meaning is, that however men now are so dispersed in their habitations, and differ so much in language and customs from each other, yet they all were originally of the same *stock*, and did derive their succession from that first *man* whom *God* created. Neither can it be conceived

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on what account *Adam* in the *Scripture* is called the *first man*, and that *he was made a living soul, and of the earth, earthly*; unless it were to denote that he was absolutely the *first* of his kind, and so was to be the standard and measure of all that follows. And when our *Saviour* would reduce all things to the *beginning*, he instanceth in those words which were pronounced after *Eve* was formed, *But from the beginning of the Creation God made them male and female; For this cause shall a man leave Father and Mother and cleave unto his Wife.* Now nothing can be more plain and easie than from hence to argue thus; those of whom those words were spoken, were the first male and female which were made in the *beginning* of the Creation; but it is evident these words were spoken of *Adam* and *Eve: And* Adam *said, this is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: therefore shall a man leave his Father and his Mother and shall cleave unto his Wife.* If the *Scriptures* then of the *New Testament* be true, it is most plain and evident that all mankind is descended from *Adam*; and no less conspicuous is it from the *history* of the *Creation* as delivered by *Moses*.

1 Cor. 15. 45, 47.

Mark 10. 6, 7.

Gen. 2. 23, 24.

Sect. 2.

For how necessary had it been for *Moses*, when he was giving an account of the *Origin* of *things* to have discovered by whom the World was first planted, if there had been any such *plantation* before *Adam*; but to say that all the design of *Moses* was only to give an account of the *Origin* and History of the *Jewish* Nation, and that *Adam* was only the first of that stock, is manifestly ridiculous, it being so clear, that not only from *Adam* and *Noah*, but from *Sem*, *Abraham*, and *Isaac*, came other Nations besides that of *Jews*. And by the same reason that it is said, that *Moses* only speaks of the *Origin* of the *Jewish Nation* in the *history* of *Adam*, it may as well be said that *Moses* speaks only of the making of *Canaan*, and that part of the *Heavens* which was over it, when he describes the *Creation* of the *World* in the six days work. For why may not the *Earth* in the second *verse* of *Genesis* be as well understood of the *Land* of *Judæa*, and the light and production of *Animals* and *Vegetables* referr only to that, as to understand it so in reference to the *Flood*, and in many other passages relating to those eldest times? But the *Authour* of that *Hypothesis* answers, *That the first Chapter of* Genesis *may relate to*

the true Origin of the world, and the first peopling of it, but in the second Moſes *begins to give an account of the first man and woman of the Jewiſh Nation.* Very probable! but if this be not a putting aſunder thoſe which *God* hath joyned together, nothing is. For doth not *Moſes* plainly at firſt give an account of the formation of things, in the firſt ſix days, and of his *reſt* on the *ſeventh?* but how could he be ſaid to have reſted then from the *works* of *Creation*, if after this followed the *formation* of *Adam* and *Eve* in the ſecond Chapter? Beſides if the forming of *man*, mentioned, *Gen.* 2.7. be diſtinct from that mentioned, *Gen.* 1. 27. then by all *parity* of *reaſon*, תולדות השמים והארץ the *Generations* of *Heaven* and *Earth* mentioned, *Gen.* 2. 4. muſt be diſtinct from the *Creation of the Heaven and Earth*, mentioned, *Gen.* 1. 1. And ſo if there were another *Creation* of *Heaven* and *Earth* belonging to the *Jews* in *Gen.* 2. we may likewiſe believe that there was a new *Creation* of *man* and *woman* in that *Chapter* diſtinct from that mentioned in the former. Again further, if there had been any ſuch perſons in the world before *Adam*, no doubt *Adam* himſelf was ignorant of them; or elſe it had been a falſe and ridiculous account which he gives of the name of his Wife
Gen. 3. 20. חוה, *becauſe ſhe was* אם כל חי *the Mother of all living.* Not of all living *things*, for that had been a more proper deſcription of a *Ceres*, or *Magna Mater*, or *Diana multimammia*, of our Grand-mother the Earth; but certainly it extends to *all of the kind*, that all living creatures that are of *humane nature* came from her. So the *Chaldee Paraphraſt* underſtands it, ſhe was called *Hava*, becauſe ſhe was אמא דכל בני אנשא *the Mother of all the Sons of men.* And ſo the *Arabick verſion, quia ipſa fuit mater omnis viventis rationalis.* To which purpoſe our Learned *Selden* cites the verſion of the *Mauritanian Jews*, and the *Perſick* of *Tawaſius.*

Selden de jure natur. & gent. l. 1. c. 5. p. 65.

But what-ever the credit or authority of theſe Verſions be, this is moſt certain, that *Adam* had no reaſon at all to have given this name to his *wife*, as being *the Mother of all living*, if there had been any of mankind exiſting in the world from other mothers, which had been long before *Eve* was formed. So that we find it plain and clear, that if the report given of things in *Scripture* be true, the *hypotheſis* of *Præ-Adamites* is undoubtedly falſe. And certainly who-ever ſeriouſly conſiders the

the frequent reflexions on the Authority of the *Scriptures* which were cast by the *Author* of that *Fiction*, and his endeavouring on all occasions to *derogate* from the *miracles* recorded in it, may easily suspect the design of that *Author* was not to gain any credit to his opinion from those arguments from *Scripture*, which he makes shew of (which are pitifully weak and ridiculous,) but having by the help of such arguments made his opinion more plausible, his hope was that his opinion would in time undermine the *Scriptures* themselves. When he had made it appear that the account given in the *Scriptures* of the plantation of the World was unsatisfactory, since there were men before *Adam*, which the *Scriptures* to please the *Jewish Nation*, take no notice of. So that after he had attempted to *prostitute* the *Scriptures* to his opinion, his next work had been to have turned them out of *doors*, as not of *credit* to be relied on by any when they were so common to every opinion. But how impious, absurd and rude that attempt was upon the *sacred* and *inviolable authority* of the *Scriptures*, hath been so fully discovered by his very many not unlearned adversaries, that it might seem needless so much as to have taken notice of so weakly grounded, and infirmly proved an opinion, had it not thus far lain in my way in order to the clearing the true *Origin* of *Nations* according to the *Scriptures*. The main *foundations* of which fabulous opinion lying chiefly in the pretended *antiquities* of the *Chaldæans*, *Ægyptians*, and others, have been fully taken away in our first *book*, where our whole design was to manifest the want of *credibility* in those *accounts* of *ancient times*, which are delivered by *Heathen Nations* in opposition to the *Scriptures*. There is nothing at all in *Scripture* from the *Creation* of *Adam* to the *Flood* which seems to give any countenance to that *figment*, but only what may be easily resolved from the *consideration* of the great *conciseness* of the *Mosaick History*, in reporting that long interval of time which was between the fall of *Adam*, and the *Flood*; By means of which conciseness such things are reported as speedily done, because immediately succeeding in the story, which asked a very considerable time before they could be effected; and besides all things which were done before the Flood, being all quite obliterated by it, and all the numerous posterity of *Adam* being then destroyed (only *Noah* and his Family

Family excepted,) to what purpoſe had it been any further to have reported the *paſſages* before the *Flood*, otherwiſe than thereby to let us underſtand the *certainty* of the *ſucceſſion* of perſons from *Adam*, and ſuch *actions* in thoſe times which might be remarkable *diſcoveries* of *God's providence* and Man's *wickedneſs* in it, which being moſt apparent at firſt in *Cain* and his poſterity, did by degrees ſo ſpread its ſelf over the face of the then inhabited World, that the juſt *God* was thereby provoked to ſend a *Deluge* among them to ſweep away the preſent inhabitants to make room for another *Generation* to ſucceed them.

Sect. 3. This therefore we now come to conſider, *viz. The Hiſtory of the Flood*, and the *certainty of the propagation of the World* from the poſterity of *Noah* after the *Flood*. I begin with the *Hiſtory of the Flood* its ſelf, as to which, two things will be ſufficient to demonſtrate the truth of it. 1. *If there be nothing in it repugnant to reaſon.* 2. *If we have ſufficient evidence of the truth of it, from ſuch who have not yet believed the Scriptures.* There are only two things which ſeem queſtionable to reaſon concerning the Flood; the firſt, is, *concerning the poſſibility of the Flood its ſelf*; the other is, *concerning the capacity of the Ark for preſerving all kinds of Animals.* The only ground of queſtioning the *poſſibility* of ſuch a *Flood*, as that is related in *Scripture*, hath been from hence, that ſome have ſuppoſed it impoſſible that all the *water* which is contained in the *air*, ſuppoſing it to fall down, ſhould raiſe the *ſurface* of *water* upon the earth a *foot* and a *half* in *height*; ſo that either new *waters* muſt be created to overflow the earth, or elſe there muſt be ſuppoſed a *rarefaction* of the Water contained in the Sea and all Rivers, ſo that it muſt take up at leaſt fifteen times the *ſpace* that now it doth; but then they ſay, if the *Water* had been thus *rarified*, it could neither have deſtroyed *man* nor *beaſt*, neither could *Noah's Ark* have been born up by it any more than by *liquid Air*. To this therefore, I anſwer,

Firſt, I cannot ſee any urgent neceſſity from the *Scripture* to aſſert, that the *Flood* did ſpread its ſelf over all the *ſurface* of the *earth*. That all *mankind* (thoſe in the Ark excepted) were deſtroyed by it, is moſt certain according to the *Scriptures*. When the occaſion of the Flood is thus expreſſed,

Gen. 6. 5, 7. *And God ſaw that the wickedneſs of man was great upon the earth,*

earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created, from the face of the earth. It could not be then any particular deluge of so small a Country as *Palæstine*, which is here expressed, as some have ridiculously imagined; for we find an *universal corruption* in the earth mentioned as the cause; an *universal* threatning upon all men for this cause; and afterwards an *universal destruction* expressed, as the *effects* of this *Flood*. *And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, and every man. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground both man and cattel, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the Heaven, and they were destroyed from the Earth, and* Noah *only remained alive, and they that were with him in the Ark.* So then it is evident that the Flood was *universal* as to mankind, but from thence follows no necessity at all of asserting the universality of it as to the *Globe* of the Earth, unless it be sufficiently proved that the whole Earth was peopled before the *Flood*: which I despair of ever seeing proved. And what reason can there be to extend the *Flood* beyond the occasion of it, which was the *corruption* of *mankind?* And it seems very strange that in so short an *Interval*, in comparison as that was from *Adam* to the *Flood*, according to the ordinary computation, *viz.* 1656 years, and not much above two thousand, according to the largest, the world should then be fully peopled, when in so much longer a *space* of *time* since the *Flood* to this day, the Earth is capable of receiving far more *Inhabitants*, than now it hath. The only probability then left for asserting the *universality* of the *Flood*, as to the *Globe* of the *Earth*, is from the destruction of all *living creatures* together with *man*; now though men might not have spread themselves over the whole *surface* of the *Earth*, yet *beasts* and *creeping things* might, which were all destroyed with the Flood: For it is said, *That all flesh died that moved upon the Earth, both of fowl and of cattel, and of beast, and of every creeping thing, that creepeth upon the Earth, and every man.* To what end should there be not only a note of universality added, but such a particular enumeration of the several *kinds* of *beasts*, *creeping things*, and *fowls*, if they were not all destroyed? To this I answer. I grant as far as the *Flood extended*, all these were destroyed; Gen. 7. 21, 23.

but

but I see no reason to extend the *destruction* of these beyond that *compass* and *space* of *Earth* where men inhabited: Because the punishment upon the *beasts*, was *occasioned by*, and could not but be *concomitant* with the *destruction* of *mankind*, but (the occasion of the *deluge* being the *sin* of *man*, who was punished in the *beasts* that were destroyed for his sake, as well as in himself) where the *occasion* was not, as where there were *animals*, and no men, there seems no necessity of extending the *Flood* thither. But to what end then it will be replied, *Did God command* Noah, *with so much care to take of all kinds of beasts and birds, and creeping things into the Ark with him, if all these living creatures were not destroyed by the Flood?* I answer, because all those things were destroyed where-over the *Flood* was; suppose then the whole *Continent* of *Asia* was peopled before the *Flood*, which is as much as we may in reason suppose, I say, all the living *creatures* in that Continent were all destroyed; or if we may suppose it to have extended over our whole *Continent* of the *anciently known World*; what reason would there be that in the opposite part of the *Globe*, viz. *America*, which we suppose to be unpeopled then, all the living *creatures* should there be destroyed, because men had sinned in this? And would there not on this supposition have been a sufficient reason to preserve *living creatures* in the *Ark* for *future propagation*, when all other *living creatures* extant had been in such remote places as would not have been *accessible* by them in many *generations*, and those *beasts* growing wild for want of *Inhabitants*, would not have proved presently serviceable for the *use* of men after the *Flood?* Which was certainly the main thing looked at in the preservation of them in the *Ark*, that men might have all of them ready for their *use* presently after the *Flood*, which could not have been, had not the several *kinds* been preserved in the Ark, although we suppose them not destroyed in all parts of the World.

Sect. 4. All this proceeds on supposition that *animals* were *propagated* much further in the World than men were, before the *Flood*. Which I confess seems very probable to me, on this account, because the production of *animals* is parallel in *Genesis* with that of *Fishes*, and both of them different from Man;

Gen. 1. 20, 21. *For God saith, Let the Waters bring forth every moving creature that hath life*; viz. *Fish, and Fowl*; and accordingly it is said,

that

that the Waters brought forth abundantly every living creature after their kind, and every fowl after his kind. Accordingly in the production of *beasts*, we read, *Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind, and it was so:* But in the production of Man, it is said, *Let us make Man in our own likeness.* From hence I observe this difference between the *production* of *animals*, and of *man*, that in the one *God* gave a *prolifick power* to the *Earth* and *Waters* for *production* of the several *living creatures* which came from them; so that the *seminal principles* of them were contained in the *matter* out of which they were produced, which was otherwise in *man*, who was made by a peculiar hand of the great *Creator* himself, who thence is said to have *formed man of the dust of the ground.* Now therefore although there were but one *Male* and *Female* of mankind at *first*, which had a special *formation* by *God* himself; yet there is no reason we should conceive it to be so as to the *production* of other *living creatures*, whether *Fish*, or *Fowl*, or *Beasts*; but the *prolifick vertue* being by *God's power* given to that *material principle* out of which they were formed, it may very well be supposed that many of the same kind were at first produced. For it seems very strange to imagine that in the whole *Ocean* there should be only *two* of a kind produced; but *Fish* and *Fowl* both arising from the *water*, we may have just reason to think, that the *waters* being separated before this *prolifick vertue* was communicated to the whole *mass* of *Waters*, might in the several *parts* of the *Globe* of the *Earth*, bring forth both *Fish* and *Fowl* after their kinds. The same I say of the production of *Animals* in the sixth day's work, which are ranked into three sorts, *Cattle*, *Creeping-things*, and *Beasts* of the *Earth* after their kinds; Now *God* saying, *Let the Earth bring forth her living creatures*, (and that after the waters had divided some parts of the *Earth* from other, so that there could be no passage for the *Cattle*, *Creeping-things*, and *Beasts* out of one part into another, without the help of Man,) it seems very probable that at least those *parts* of the *Earth* which were thus divided from each other, did bring forth these several living *creatures* after their kinds, which did after propagate in those parts without being brought thither by the help of man. If now this *supposition* be embraced, by it

Ver. 24. Ver. 26. Gen. 2. 6.

we preſently clear our ſelves of many *difficulties* concerning the *propagation* of *Animals* in the World, and their converſation in the *Ark*, which many have been ſo much to ſeek for ſatisfaction in. As how the unknown kind of *Serpents* in *Braſil*, the *ſlow-bellied* creature of the *Indies*, and all thoſe ſtrange *ſpecies* of *animals* ſeen in the *Weſt-Indies* ſhould either come into the *Ark* of *Noah*, or be conveyed out of it into thoſe *Countries* which are divided from that *Continent* where the *Flood* was by ſo vaſt an *Ocean* on the one ſide, and at leaſt ſo large a tract of *Land* on the other (ſuppoſing any paſſage out of one *Continent* into another, which yet hath not been diſcovered.) Beſides, ſome kind of *Animals* cannot live out of that particular *Clime* wherein they are; and there are many ſorts of *animals* diſcovered in *America*, and the adjoyning *Iſlands*, which have left no *remainders* of *themſelves* in theſe parts of the World. And it ſeems very ſtrange that theſe ſhould propagate into thoſe remote parts of the *world* from the *place* of the *Flood*, and leave none at all of their number behind them in thoſe parts from whence they were propagated. Theſe things at leaſt make that opinion very probable which extends the *production* of *Animals* beyond that of *mankind* in the old World, and that the *Flood* though it deſtroyed all *mankind*, and every *living creature* within that compaſs wherein *mankind* inhabited, yet might not extend it ſelf to thoſe parts, and the *Animals* therein, in which men had never inhabited. And by this means we need not make ſo many *miracles* as ſome are fain to do about the *Flood*; and all thoſe difficulties concerning the *propagation* of *animals* do of themſelves vaniſh and fall to the ground. This is the firſt *way* of reſolving the *difficulty* concerning the *poſſibility* of the *Flood*, by aſſerting it not to have been over the whole *Globe* of the *Earth*, but only over thoſe *parts* where *mankind* inhabited.

Sect. 5. *Secondly*, Suppoſe the *Flood* to have been over the whole *Globe* of the *Earth*, yet there might have been *water* enough to have over-whelmed it to the *height* mentioned in *Scripture*. For which we are to conſider that many cauſes concurred to the making of this *Deluge*; firſt, the Air was *condenſed* into *Clouds*, and thoſe fell down with continued force and violence, not breaking into drops, but all in a body (which Sir *Walter Rawleigh* parallels with the *ſpouts* of the *Weſt-Indies*) which

Hiſt. of the World, l. B. c. 7. *ſect.* 6.

are

are thence called the *Cataracts* or *Flood-gates* of Heaven, *God* loosening (as he expresseth it) the power retentive which was in the *Clouds*, and so the waters must needs fall in abundance, according to the expression of *Job*, *Behold he with-holdeth the waters, and they dry up, also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.* Now, I say, although these *waters* falling down with so much fury and violence, as well as in so great abundance might quickly destroy all *living creatures*; yet this was not all; for *God* who held in the Ocean within its bounds, whereby he saith to it, *Thus far it shall go, and no further*, might then give it commission to execute his justice upon the sinfull World: and to all this, we have another cause of the *Deluge*, which was, *That the Fountains of the great Deep were broken up.* By which *Vatablus*, most probably understands, *Immensam illam & profundam aquarum copiam quæ est subter terram:* That vast *body* of *Waters* which lies in the *bowels* of the *Earth*; Now when all these *Fountains* were broken up, and the *Waters* within the *Earth* rush out with violence and impetuosity upon it, it must needs cause an *inundation* so great as that is mentioned in the *Scripture.* For as that judicious Historian Sir *W. Rawleigh* observes, Let us consider that the Earth had above 21000 Miles compass, the *Diameter* of the *Earth* according to that Circle 7000 Miles, and then from the *Superficies* to the Center 3500 Miles; take then the highest Mountain of the World, *Caucasus, Taurus, Teneriff*, or any other, and I do not find, saith he, that the highest exceeds thirty Miles in *height:* It is not then impossible, answering *reason* with *reason*, that all those Waters mixed within the Earth, 3500 Miles deep, should be able to cover the space of 30 Miles in *height*, which 30 Miles upright being found in the *depths* of the Earth 116 times; for the *Fountains* of the *great Deep* were broken, and the Waters drawn out of the bowels of the Earth. But then withall, saith he, if we consider the *proportion* which the Earth bears to the *Air* about it, we may easily understand the *possibility* of the *Flood*, without any *new creation* of *waters*; for supposing so much Air to be condensed, and so turned into Water which doth encompass the Earth, it will not seem strange to men of judgment, yea but of ordinary understanding, that the Earth (*God* so pleasing) was covered over with Waters, without any new *Creation.*

Job 12. 15.

Gen. 7. 11.

Ibid.

But this will yet appear more probable if the *height* of the *higheſt Mountains* doth bear no greater a proportion to the *Diameter* of the *Earth*, than of the 1670 *part* to the *whole*, ſuppoſing the *Diameter* of the *Earth* to be 8355 Miles, as *P. Gaſſendus* computes both. And it is more than probable, that men have been exceedingly miſtaken, as to the *height* of *Mountains*, which comes ſo far ſhort of what Sir *Walter Rawleigh* allows to them, that the higheſt Mountain in the World will not be found to be five direct Miles in *height* taking the *altitude* of them from the *plain* they ſtand upon. *Olympus* whoſe height is ſo extolled by the *Poets* and ancient *Greeks*, that it is ſaid to exceed the *Clouds*; yet *Plutarch* tells us that *Xenagoras* meaſured it and found it not to exceed a Mile and a half *perpendicular* and about 70 Paces. Much about the ſame height *Pliny* ſaith that *Dicæarchus* found the Mountain *Pelion* to be. The Mount *Athos* is ſuppoſed of extraordinary *height*, becauſe it caſts its ſhadow into the *Iſle* of *Lemnos*, which according to *Pliny* was 87 Miles, yet *Gaſſendus* allows it but *two Miles* in height; but *Iſaac Voſſius* in a learned diſcourſe concerning the *height* of Mountains in his *notes* on *Pomponius Mela*, doth not allow above 10 or 11 *Furlongs* at moſt to the *height* of Mount *Athos*. *Caucaſus* by *Ricciolus* is ſaid to be 51 *Miles* in *height*: *Gaſſendus* allowing it to be higher than *Athos* or *Olympus*, yet conceives it not above three or four Miles at moſt; but *Voſſius* will not yield it above *two Miles* perpendicular, for which he gives this very good reaſon; *Polybius* affirms, there is no Mountain in *Greece* which may not be aſcended in a day's time, and makes the higheſt *Mountain* there not to exceed *ten Furlongs*; which, ſaith *Voſſius*, it is ſcarce poſſible for any one to reach unleſs he be a *Mountainer* born; any other will ſcarce be able to aſcend above *ſix Furlongs perpendicular*; for in the aſcent of a Mountain every *pace* doth reach but to an hand-breadth, *perpendicular*; but if we do allow *eight Furlongs* to a day's *aſcent*, yet thereby it will appear that the higheſt *Mountains* in the World are not above *twenty-four Furlongs* in height, ſince they may be aſcended in *three days* time: and it is affirmed of the top of Mount *Caucaſus*, that it may be aſcended in leſs than the compaſs of three days, and therefore cannot be much above two Miles in height. Which may be the eaſier believed of any other *Mountain*, when that which is reputed

Tom. 2. op. Phyſ. ſect. 3. l. 1.

Plut. in Æmilian. Plin. l. 2. c. 65.

Voſſ. in Pomp. Melam, l. 5. c. 2. p. 115, &c.

reputed the *highest* of the World, *viz.* the *Pike* of *Teneriff*, which the Inhabitants call *Pica de Terraria*, may be ascended in that compass of time, *viz. three days:* for in the *months* of *July* and *August* (which are the only months in which men can ascend it, because all other times of the year Snow lies upon it, although neither in the *Isle* of *Teneriff* nor any other of the *Canary-Islands* there be *Snow* ever seen) the *Inhabitants* then ascend to the top of it in *three days* time, which top of it is not *Pyramidal* but *plain*, from whence they gather some *sulphureous stones*, which are carried in great quantities into *Spain*. So that according to the *proportion* of *eight Furlongs* to a days journey, this *Pike* of *Teneriff* will not exceed the height of a *German* Mile *perpendicular*, as *Varenius* confesseth, than which he thinks likewise, that no Mountain in the World is higher. For what *Pliny* speaks of the *Alps* being *fifty Miles* in height, must be understood not *perpendicular*, but in regard of the *obliquity* of the *ascent* of it; so that he might account so much from the *foot* of the *Alps* to the top of them, and yet the *Alps* in a *perpendicular* line not come near the height of a *German* Mile. If then the higheſt Mountains do not exceed much above *three Miles* in height, (for the *Spaniards* themselves affirm, that those lofty Mountains of *Peru*, in comparison of which, they say, the *Alps* are but like *Cottages*, may be ascended in *four days* compass,) we see from hence then far greater probability, how the *Waters* in the time of the general *Flood* might over-top the higheſt Mountains.

V. Varenium Geogr. General. l. 1. c. 10. prop. 3.

Especially if it be made evident that there is so great an *Abysse* of *subterraneous waters*, that the breaking open of the *Fountains* of it may so much encrease the inundation arising from the *Clouds*, and from the breaking in of the *Ocean* upon the main *Land*. And that there is such a *mass* of *Waters* in the body of the Earth, is evident from the *Origin* of *Fountains*; for the opinion of *Aristotle* imputing them to the *condensation* of *Air* in the *caverns* of the *Earth*, and that of other *Philosophers* ascribing them to the fall of *rain-water* received into such *Cisterns* in the Earth which are capable of receiving it, are both equally *unsatisfactory*, unless we suppose a *mass* of *waters* in the bowels of the Earth, which may be as the common *stock* to supply those *Fountains* with. For it is very hard, conceiving how mere *Air* should be so far *condensed*, as to cause

Sect. 6.

not

not only ſuch a number of *Fountains*, but ſo great a quantity of water as runs into the Sea by thoſe *Rivers* which come from them, (as the River *Volga* is ſuppoſed to empty ſo much water in a years time into the *Caſpian Sea*, as might ſuffice to cover the whole *Earth*,) by which likewiſe it is moſt evident that there muſt be ſome ſubterranean *paſſages* in the *Sea*, or elſe of neceſſity, by that *abundance* of *water* which continually runs into it from the *Rivers*, it would *over-flow* and drown the World. And from this multitude of *waters* which comes from *Fountains*, it is likewiſe evident, that the *Origin* of *Fountains* cannot be merely from ſuch *water* which falls from the *Clouds*, which would never ſuffice to maintain ſo full and uninterrupted a *ſtream* as many *Fountains* have: Eſpecially if that be true which ſome aſſert, that *rain-water* doth never *moiſten* the *Earth* above *ten foot deep*, for of far greater *profundity* many *Fountains* are. And beſides, the *rain-water* runs moſt upon the *ſurface* of the *Earth*, and ſo doth rather ſwell the *Rivers* which thereby run with greater force in their paſſage to the *Ocean*, and doth not lodge it ſelf preſently in the *Earth*, eſpecially if it deſcends in a greater *quantity*, which alone is able to fill ſuch *Ciſterns* ſuppoſed to be in the Earth, eſpecially in Mountains, which may keep a ſtream continually running. Although therefore we may acknowledge that the fall of *rain* may much conduce to the *over-flowing* and *continuance* of *Fountains*, as is evident by the greater force of *Springs* after continued *rains*, and by the decay of many of them in *hot* and *dry weather*, (which yet I had rather impute to the *Sun's* exhaling by his continued heat thoſe moiſt *vapours* in the Earth, which ſhould continually ſupply the *Springs*, than merely to the want of Rain,) and by the riſe of moſt great *Rivers* from ſuch *Fountains* which came from the *foot* of *Mountains*; where the ground is ſuppoſed to be of ſo hard and conſiſtent a ſubſtance, as ſtone, or chalk, or ſomething of like nature, which might help to the conſervation of water there, from whence it after ran in ſtreams to the *Ocean*, (which was the great argument of the famous *Peireskius* for this opinion,) although I ſay, theſe things may argue thus far, that *rain-water* doth much conduce to the preſervation of *Springs*, yet it cannot give a ſufficient account of the *Origin* of them: Which with the greateſt reaſon and probability is imputed to thoſe *ſubterraneous*

V. Gaſſend. vit. Peireskii, l. 3. p. 292.

raneous waters which pass up and down through the bowels of the Earth. Some have fancied the Earth to be as one *great Animal*, whose *subterraneous passages* where like *veins* in the *body*, which received *water* out of the *Sea*, as the veins do *blood* out of the *Liver*; and that there are some kind of hot *vapours* in the Earth which supply the place of *vital spirits*, which are diffused up and down the body through the *arteries*. And that as in an *animal*, there are some parts which upon the least *prick* do send forth *blood*, and others are more *callous* where the *incision* must be deeper before any blood appears; so it is in the Earth, when it is opened in a *right vein* we find presently a *Spring* of *water*; but if we chance to hit on a wrong place, we go deep and may find none; not that Water is wanting, but we have not hit on the *veins* through which it runs. And thence as the *blood* with equal freedom and velocity ascends into the *head* as it runs into the *legs*, because it is equally *dispersed* into all the parts from the *center* of it; so in the body of the Earth it is as natural for the *water* to ascend into the *tops* of *Mountains*, as it is to fall down into the center of the Earth. And that it is no more wonder to see *Springs* issue out of *Mountains*, than it is to see a man *bleed* in the *veins* of his *fore-head* when he is let blood there. So in all places of the Earth the parts of it are not disposed for *apertion*; for some of them are so hard and *compact*, that there seems to be no passage through them, (which is the most probable reason, why there is no rain neither in those places, because there is no such exsudation of those moist *vapours* through the *surface* of the *Earth*, which may yield matter for *rain*, as it is in many of the sandy places of *Africa*; but usually mountainous Countries have more large, and as it were *Temple-veins* through which the moist *vapours* have a free and open passage, and thence there are not only more frequent *Springs* there, but *Clouds* and *Rains* too.) Now if this account of the *Origin* of *Springs* in the Earth be as rational as it is ingenious and handsome, (and there is not much can be said against it, but only that then all *Fountains* should be *salt* as the water is from whence they come,) then we easily understand how the *Earth* might be *over-flowed* in the universal *Deluge*; for then the *Fountains* of the *deep* were broken up, or there was an *universal opening* of the *veins* of the Earth, whereby

all

all the water contained in them would presently run upon the *surface* of the Earth, and must needs according to its proportion advance its self to a considerable height. But because the salving the difference of the *water* in *Springs* from what it is in the *Sea* is so considerable a *Phænomenon* in our present case, I therefore rather take this following as the most *rational* account of the *Origin* of *Fountains*, viz. That there are great *cavities* in the *Earth*, which are capable of receiving a considerable *quantity* of *water*, which continually runs into them from the *Sea*, (which as it continually receives fresh supplies from the Rivers which empty themselves into it, so it dispatcheth away a like quantity thorow those *spungy* parts of the Earth under the *Ocean*, which are most apt to suck in and convey away the surplusage of water,) so that by this means the *Sea* never swells by the water conveyed into it by the *Rivers*, there being as continual a *circulation* in the *body* of the Earth of the *water* which passeth out of the *Ocean* into the *subterraneous Caverns*, and from thence to the *Mountains*, and thence into the *Sea* again; as there is a *circulation* of *blood* in man's body from the *heart* by the *arteries* into the *exteriour parts*, and returning back again by the *veins* into the *heart*. According to which we may imagine such a place in the heart of the Earth like *Plato*'s *Baratrum*,

* Τῆλε μαλ' ἠχὴ βάθυσην ὑπὸ χθονὸς ὄξι βέβρυχεν.

As *Plato* in his *Phædrus* describes it out of *Homer*, *a long and deep subterraneous cavity.* εἰς ὃν τοῦτο τὸ χάσμα συῤῥέυσί τε πάντες οἱ ποταμοὶ, καὶ ἐκ τούτου πάλιν πάντες ἐκῥέυσι. *Into which cavity all the Rivers at last flow, and from which they again disperse themselves abroad.* Now this *Cavity* of the *Earth* thus fill'd with water, supplies the *place* of the *heart* in the *body* of the *Earth*, from which all those several *aquæducts* which are in the Earth have their continual *supply*; but that which makes those passages of water which we call *Springs* and *Fountains* properly, I suppose, is thus generated; from those *Cavities* fill'd with *water* in the *Earth* by reason of the *hot streams* which are in the *body* of the *Earth*, there are continually rising some *vapours* or little *particles* of *water*, which are dis-joyned from each other by the *heat*, by reason of which they attain a greater

greater *celerity* of *motion*, and so pass through the inner *pores* of the Earth 'till they come near the *superficies* of it. Which when they have approached to, they are beat back again by the *cold*, which environs the *surface* of the *Earth*, or at least are so arrested by the *cold* and condensed by it, that they lose the form of *vapours*, and become perfect *water* again. Which *water* being now more *gross*, than while it was a mere *vapour*, cannot descend again through the same *pores* through which it ascended before, because these are not now capable of receiving it: And therefore it seeks out some *wider passages* near the *surface* of the *Earth*, by which means it moves in an *oblique manner*, and is ready to embrace any other *vapours* which are *arrested* in the same manner; now when these are grown to a considerable *body* in the *surface* of a *Mountain*, or a *Plain*, and find a vent fit for them, there appears a proper *Fountain*, whose *streams* are still maintained by the same *condensation* of *vapours*, which when they are once come abroad, are in continual *motion* whereby *Rivers* are made, which are still finding a passage through the *declivity* of the *surface* of the Earth, whereby they may return to the *Ocean* again. Now according to this account, that grand *Phænomenon* of the *freshness* of *Fountain-water*, when the water of the *Sea* is salt, whence it originally comes, is sufficiently resolved. For mere *transcolation* may by degrees take away that which the *Chymists* call the *fixed salt*; and for the *Volatile salt* of it (which being a more spiritous thing, is not removable by *distillation*, and so neither can it be by *transcolation*,) yet such an *evaporation* as that mentioned, may serve to do it, because it is evident that *fresh water* will fall from the *clouds* which hath risen from those *vapours* which have come out of the *Sea*; and besides these *vapours* or small *particles* of water in their passage thorow the Earth (especially when they come near the surface of it) do *incorporate* with other *sweet vapours*, as those which come from *rain* and others, by which means they insensibly lose their former *acidity* and *sharpness*. But those *Fountains* which do retain their former *saltness*, as there are many such in the world, may very probably be supposed not to have come from those *vapours* condensed, but to be a kind of a breaking of *vein* in which the *salt* water was conveyed up and down the *body* of the Earth. Now then, considering that *mass* of *wa-*

ters and multitude of *vapours* arising thence which are in the Earth, how easie is it for us to understand what the *breaking open* the *Fountains* of the *deep* means in *Scripture*, and how by that means together with the *falling* down of the *Cataracts* of the Clouds, and the letting *loose* of the *Ocean*, the whole Earth might be over-spread with an universal deluge? The possibility of which was the thing to be shewed.

Sect. 7. The next thing we come to concerning the *Flood*, is, the *capacity* of the *Ark* for receiving the several *animals* which were to propagate the world afterwards. Concerning which, two things are necessary to be understood, what the measure of the *Ark* was, and what the *number* of *animals* contained in it. The measure of the *Ark* must be determined by the *proportion* of the *cubit*, which there is no reason at all to suppose either with *Origen* and others to have been the *Geometrical cubit*, which contains six ordinary cubits or nine *feet*, both because we find no mention at all of any such *cubit* in *Scripture*, and because the *Fabrick* of the *Ark* would have been of too vast a proportion. Neither yet is it probable, which Sir *W. Rawleigh* supposeth, that this *cubit* must be of a proportion as much exceeding ours, as the *stature* of a *Gyant* doth ours, both because there is no certain *evidence*, either from *Scripture* or *Reason*, that the *proportion* of men then did generally exceed what is now; and besides, this tends not in the least to make the thing more plain. For according to that proportion, we must then have imagined *beasts* to have been as well as men; for the *horse* must have been *proportionably* as *great* to have been *serviceable* to men of that stature, and so the *Animals* would have taken up as much more room in the Ark as the *cubit* is supposed to be bigger. I suppose then that *Moses* speaks of the *cubit* most in *use* in his own time (for he writ so that they for whose use he writ, might be easily able to understand him,) now this *cubit* by the consent of writers contained a *foot* and a *half* in length; according to which proportion, supposing the *Ark* by *Moses* his description to have 300 *cubits* in length, 50 in *breadth*, and 30 in *height*, the whole capacity of the *Ark*, according to the *computation* of *Joh. Buteo* comes to 450000 solid cubits. For the length of 300 cubits being *multiplied* into the *breadth* of fifty *cubits*, and the *product* by the height of 30 cubits makes the whole *Concavity* 450000. Which *Matthæus*

Gen. 6. 15.

Buteo de arca Noe. p. 93.

thaus Hoſtius reducing to the *German meaſure*, makes the longitude of the *Ark* to be 31 *perches*, 4 cubits, 5 fingers; the *latitude* 5 *perches*, 2 *cubits* and 11 *fingers*; the *altitude* 3 *perches* 1 *cubit*, 9 *fingers*; allowing to every perch 15 *Roman feet*. So that if we take a *perch* to contain 10 *Hebrew cubits*, which exceeds the former 11 *fingers*, the whole capacity of the *Ark* will be 450 cubical perches. And as he ſaith, *Hujuſmodi ſane ædificii amplitudo capaciſſima eſt, & quamlibet magno animantium numero haud dubie ſufficere potuit*, the *Ark* of ſo large a capacity might eaſily contain the ſeveral kinds of animals in it. Which will be eaſily underſtood, if according to our former *ſuppoſition*, only the *animals* of the *inhabited* part of the *world* were preſerved in the *Ark*; but admitting that all *kinds* of *animals* were there, there would be *room* enough for them, and for proviſion for them. For which Sir *W. Rawleigh* gives a prudent *caution*, that men ought not to take *animals* of a *mixt nature*, as *Mules* and *Hyæna's*, nor ſuch as differ in ſize and ſhape from each other, as the *Cat* of *Europe*, and Ownce of *India*, into the ſeveral *ſpecies* of *animals*. Sir *W. Rawleigh* following *Buteo* reckons 89, or leaſt any be omitted, a 100 ſeveral kinds of *beaſts*, and undertakes to demonſtrate from a *triple proportion* of all beaſts to the *Ox*, *Wolf*, and *Sheep*, that there was ſufficient capacity for them in the *Ark*. *Hoſtus* allows a 150 ſeveral *kinds* of *animals*, yet queſtions not the *capacity* of the *Ark*. But theſe things are ſo particularly made out by thoſe learned *Authors*, eſpecially by *Buteo*, that I ſhall rather referr the Reader for further ſatisfaction to the Authors themſelves, than take the pains to tranſcribe them.

Hoſtius de fabrica Arcæ Noah. th. 66.

I come now therefore to the evidence of the *truth* and *certainty* of this *univerſal deluge*, of which we have moſt clear and concurring *Teſtimonies* of moſt ancient Nations of the world. For which purpoſe *Grotius* and others have at large produced the teſtimony of *Beroſus* the *Chaldean* out of *Joſephus*, concerning the Flood and the *Ark* in which *Noah* was preſerved, of *Abidenus* out of *Cyril* and *Euſebius* concerning *Xiſuthrus*, or *Noah's* ſending out of the *birds* to ſee if the Flood were aſſuaged, and of *Alexander Polyhiſtor* concerning the preſervation of *animals* in the *Ark*, of *Plutarch* concerning the ſending out of the *Dove*, of *Lucian de Dea Syria* concerning the whole *ſtory*, and ſo of *Molon* and *Nicolaus Damaſcenus*. Beſides it

V. Grot. Annot. in l. 1. de Verit. relig. Chriſt. Voſſ Iſago. Chronolog. diſſert. 4. c. 2. & 3. Bochar. Geogr. ſacr. l. 1. c. 4. Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, l. 18. c. 12. & ibid. Lud. Viv.

it is manifeſted by others, how among the *Chaldeans* the memory of *Noah* was preſerved under the Fable of *Oannes*, which had part of a *fiſh*, and part of a *man*, as is evident from the *fragments* of *Apollodorus*, *Abydenus*, and *Alexander Polyhiſtor*, preſerved in *Euſebius* his *Greek Chronica*; among the *Chineſes* under the name of *Puoncuus*, who by them is ſaid to have eſcaped alone with his Family out of the univerſal Deluge, ſaith *Iſaac Voſſius*, who ſuppoſeth *Pu* or *Pi* to be only a *Prefix* to the name, and ſo that *Puoncuus*, is the ſame with ὁ Νῶχ. *Martinius* tells us, *de diluvio multa eſt apud Sinicos Scriptores mentio*, that the ancient Writers of the *Sinick Hiſtory* ſpeak much of the *Flood*. *Johannes de Laet* tells out of *Leſcharbotus* how conſtant the tradition of the *Flood* is among the *Indians*, both in New *France*, *Peru*, and other parts. This being therefore ſo fully atteſted by the evident and apparent conſent of ſo many *Writers* and *Hiſtorians*, which did not own the authority of the Scriptures, I ſhall ſuppoſe this ſufficiently proved, and proceed to the main thing which concerns the *Origin* of *Nations*, which is, *the certainty of the propagation of mankind from the poſterity of* Noah. Of which there is this ſtrong and convincing evidence, that in all that account which the *Scripture* gives of the propagation of *Nations* from the Sons of *Noah*, there is ſome remainder in the Hiſtory of that *Nation* to juſtifie the reaſon of the *impoſition* of the *name* from the *names* of the *Nations* themſelves, which have preſerved the original name of their Founder in their own, as the *Medes* from *Madai*; the *Thracians* from *Thiras*; the *Ionians* from *Javan*; the *Sidonians* from *Sidon*; the *Philiſtins* from *Poleſthim*; the *Arcæans*, *Aradians*, *Elymæans*, *Aſſyrians*, *Lydians*, from *Arki*, *Arad*, *Elam*, *Aſſur* and *Lud*, and many others produced by *Grotius*, *Montanus*, *Junius*, and eſpecially *Bochartus*, who with admirable induſtry and learning hath cleared all this part of *ſacred Hiſtory*, which concerns the reaſon of the *impoſition* of the *names* of the *people* which were propagated from the *poſterity* of *Noah*, and given a full and ſatisfactory account of the ſeveral *places* where the *poſterity* of *Noah* ſeated themſelves after the deluge. Inſtead of that therefore, I ſhall conſider the pretences which can be brought againſt it, which are chiefly theſe three. 1. That the *Chaldean Empire* ſeems to have greater antiquity than can be attributed to it by the Hiſtory

Euſeb. Chr. p. 5. ed. 2. Scaliger.

Iſ. Voſſ. epiſt. ad Colvium, p. 409.

Martin. hiſt. Sinic. l. 1. p. 12.

Joh. de Laet. de orig. gent. Americani l. 1. p. 115.

Gro. Annot. ad l. 1. de Verit. Ari. Montan. Phaleg. Junius in Gen. 10. Bochart. Geogr. Sacr. p. 1.

ſtory of *Moſes*. 2. That the moſt learned *Heathen Nations* pretend to be *ſelf-originated*, and that they came not from any other *Country*. 3. That no certain account is given from whence *America* ſhould be peopled.

Sect. 9.

1. The Hiſtory of the *Aſſyrian Empire* ſeems inconſiſtent with the propagation of the world from the ſons of *Noah*; for the reign of *Ninus* and *Semiramis* is placed by many *Chronologers* within the firſt Century after the Flood, which ſeems a manifeſt inconſiſtency with the propagation of mankind from the ſons of *Noah*; for it ſeems utterly impoſſible that the *foundations* of ſo great an *Empire* ſhould be laid in ſo ſmall a compaſs of time by the *poſterity* of three *perſons*; and beſides, *Ninus* and *Semiramis* were not the firſt who began the *Aſſyrian Empire*; for *Belus* not only reigned fifty five years before *Ninus*, but according to the *Chaldean Antiquities* from *Evechous*, who they ſay firſt reigned among them, are reckoned 495 years. But admit that the beginning of the *Aſſyrian Empire* be placed ſo low as *Petavius* and other *Chronologers* would have it, *viz.* in the year after the Flood, 153, yet the difficulty is only ſomewhat abated, but not removed; for it ſeems yet unconceivable that from three perſons in 150 years, ſuch *multitudes* ſhould ſpring, as to make ſo large an Empire as that of *Ninus*, and that within an hundred years after the Flood there ſhould be ſuch vaſt multitudes for the *building* the *Tower* of *Babel* and *diſperſion* up and down the world, ſo that according to the *Hebrew computation* in the compaſs of 300 years, *viz.* about *Abraham*'s time, the world was ſo fully peopled, that we read of ſeveral Kings encountring one another, by which it is evident the world had been peopled ſome time before, or elſe there could not have been ſuch *potent Kings* as ſome of them were at that time. This being the grand difficulty, to it I anſwer theſe things.

Petav. de doct. temp. l. 9. c. 14. Tom. 2.

1. There is no ſuch *certainty* of the beginning of the *Aſſyrian Empire*, as for the ſake of that, to queſtion the truth of the propagation of the world by the ſons of *Noah*. I have already largely manifeſted the want of credibility in the *Chronology* of the *ancient Chaldeans*, and that we have no certain grounds to rely upon in reference to it. Eſpecially as to theſe ſeven firſt *Babylonian Kings*, which are cited out of *Africanus*, by *Euſebius*, and *Georgius Syncellus*, viz. *Evechous*, *Chomasbolus*,

Ius, *Porus*, *Nechubes*, *Abius*, *Oniballus*, *Chinzirus*, who are ſaid to reign 225 years two months; and alike fabulous, I ſuppoſe, is the other *Dynaſty* of ſix *Arabian Kings*, whoſe Empire is ſaid to have ſtood 215 years to the time of *Belus*, who expelled the *Arabians*, and took the power to himſelf; And it is much more agreeable to reaſon to reject theſe two *Dynaſtyes*, which have no record of them left in any *Hiſtory* of the *Aſſyrian Empire*, but only in *Beroſus*, whoſe authority in this caſe hath been diſcuſſed already, than to follow our late excellent *Primate* of *Armagh*, who punctually ſets down the reign of the Kings of theſe two *Dynaſtyes*, but cuts off at leaſt eight *Ages* in the time of the *Aſſyrian Empire* from *Ninus* to *Sardanapalus*, which time he confines to 496 years, and placeth *Ninus* in the 2737 year of the World, according to the *Hebrew computation*, and ſo to live in the time of the *Judges*, and be contemporary with *Deborah*: Which he builds only on a place in *Herodotus*, which relates not to the time between *Ninias* and *Sardanapalus*, but to the time of the *defection* of the *Medes* from the *Aſſyrian Empire*, as *Iſaac Voſſius* hath already ſhewed. We cannot then find any certainty in the beginning of the *Aſſyrian Empire*, which may give us cauſe to queſtion the *propagation* of the world from the poſterity of *Noah*.

Uſſer. Annales Vet. Teſt. A.M. 2737.

Caſtigat. adv. Hornium, c. 10.

Gen. 9. 1.

2. We have reaſon to think that there was a more than ordinary *multiplication* of the *world* from the ſons of *Noah* after the *Flood*. For as *God* had before puniſhed the world by deſtroying mankind in it by an extraordinary manner; ſo after the *Flood*, he doth in a particular manner bleſs *Noah* and his *ſons*, and ſaid unto them, *Be fruitfull and multiply, and replenish the earth*, which may well be thought to have then had an extraordinary effect. Several ways have been attempted by learned men to make appear, to what a vaſt number the poſterity of *Noah* would increaſe in the ſpace of two or three *hundred years* after the Flood. *Petavius* ſuppoſeth that the poſterity of *Noah* might beget children at ſeventeen, and that each of *Noah*'s ſons might have eight children in the eighth year after the Flood, and that every one of theſe eight might beget eight more; by this means in onely one Family, as of *Japhet* in the year after the Flood 238, he makes a *Diagramme* conſiſting of almoſt an innumerable company of men. *Johannes Temporarius*, as our moſt learned *Primate* tells us, takes this way,

Petav. de doctrin. temp l. 9. *c.* 14.

Uſſer. Chronol. Sacr. c. 5.

way, that all of the *posterity* of *Noah*, when they attained twenty *years of Age*, had every year *twins*, on which supposition by *Arithmetical progression*, he undertakes to make it appear, that in the 102 year after the Flood, there would be of *males* and *females* 1554420, but taking away the one *half*, because of the groundless *supposition* of *twins*, yet then in that time there would be 388605 males besides females. Others suppose that each of the *sons* of *Noah* had *ten sons*, and by that proportion, in few Generations it would amount to many *thousands* within a Century. Others insist on the *parallel* between the *multiplication* of the *children* of *Israel* in *Ægypt*; that if from 72 men in the space of 215 years there are procreated 600000, how many will be born of three men in the space of an hundred years? some have said above 23000, but with what success in their *Arithmetick*, I shall not determine. But whether all or any of these *ways* be sufficient, and satisfactory, we have yet cause to believe that there was a more than ordinary *multiplication* in the posterity of *Noah* after the *Flood*. *Hern. defens. dissert. de ætat. mundi, c.* 26.

3. If we embrace the *account* of those *Copies*, which the *Septuagint* followed in their *version*, all this *difficulty* is then ceased. For that account doth very much inlarge the times, and makes almost a thousand years between the *Flood* and *Abraham*, by which means there will be sufficient *space* given for the propagation of *mankind*, the *building* the *Tower* of *Babel*, the *dispersion* of *Nations*, the *founding* the *Assyrian* Empire, the *plantation* of *Ægypt*, *China*, and other places, all which seem to have been in that time, and to concurr with that computation, as well as *Josephus* doth, and the whole *Primitive Church* before *Hierom*, which certainly ought in no case to be disregarded.

The whole *controversie* concerning this part of the *Chronology* of the World comes at last to this, Whether it be more probable that the *Jews* who lived under the *second Temple* (who then were the Trustees to whom were *committed the Oracles of God*) whom the LXX. followed in their version, had the true *reading*, or the *Talmudick Jews* after their *dispersion* and *banishment* from their *Country*, when they were *discarded* by *God* himself from being his people, when he broke up *house* among them at the *destruction* of *Jerusalem* and the *Temple*.

Temple. But if the Reader desire further satisfaction concerning this *difference* of this *Chronology* of the LXX. from that of the present *Hebrew Copies*, he may consult the learned *dissertation* of the late learned Bishop of *Chester* upon the LXX. and the latter *discourses* of *Isaac Vossius* on this subject. Setting aside then the controversie between the present *Hebrew Copies* and the LXX. in point of *integrity* and *incorruption* which I meddle not with, I cannot but subscribe to the judgment of our judicious Historian, Sir *W. Rawleigh*: *That if we look over all and do not hastily satisfie our understanding with the first things offered, and thereby being satiated do slothfully and drowsily sit down, we shall find it more agreeable rather to follow the reckoning of the LXX. who according to some editions make it above* 1072 *years between the Flood and* Abraham's *Birth, than to take away any part of those* 352 *years given. For if we advisedly consider the state and countenance of the World, such as it was in* Abraham's *time, yea before* Abraham *was born, we shall find that it were very ill done of us by following opinion without the guide of reason, to pare the time over deeply between* Abraham *and the Flood; because in cutting them too near the quick, the reputation of the whole story might perchance bleed thereby, were not the Testimony of the Scriptures supream, so as no objection can approach it; And that we did not follow withall this precept of St.* Austin, *that whersoever any one place in the Scriptures may be conceived disagreeing to the whole, the same is by ignorance of mis-interpretation understood. For in* Abraham's *time all the then known parts of the world were peopled: all Regions and Countries had their Kings.* Ægypt *had many magnificent Cities, and so had* Palæstine *and all bordering Countries; yea all that part of the world besides as far as* India: *and those not built with sticks, but of hewn stones, and defended with Walls and Rampiers, which magnificence needed a parent of more antiquity than those other men have supposed. And therefore where the Scriptures are plainest and best agreeing with reason and nature, to what end should we labour to beget doubts and scruples, or draw all things into wonders and marvels? giving also strength thereby to common cavillers, and to those men's apish brains who only bend their wits to find impossibilities and monsters in the story of the world and mankind.* Thus far that excellent Historian, whose *words* deserve *consideration.* Thus much for the first *objection.*

Proleg. ad bibl. Polyglot. cap. 9. ff. 58, 61, *&c. Isaac Vossius de LXX. Interp. & ætat. mund.*

History of the World, *p.* 1. *b.* 2. *c.* 1. *sect.* 7.

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The second is, *From the great pretence of several Nations that they were self-originated*, or came not from any other place. This was the *pretence* of the *Ægyptians*, *Græcians*, ancient *Inhabitants* of *Italy*, and others. But how little reason we have to give credit to these *pretences*, will appear on these accounts. 1. *The impossibility* in nature that *mankind* should be produced in such a way as they imagined, which we have manifested already in our discourse of the *Origin* of the Universe. 2. That the *Nations* which pretended this, were never able to give sufficient *evidence* of it to any other *Nation* which demanded it; which is manifest by their want of any certain *records* of their ancient times, which is fully proved in our discourse in the first book of the want of credibility in *Heathen Histories*. 3. The only probable reason, which induced these Nations to make themselves *Aborigines*, was, because they supposed themselves to be the first *Inhabitants* of the *Countries* they lived in, which although I may allow to the *Ægyptians*, and some other ancient *Nations*, yet I cannot do it to the *Hellens* or *Greeks*, who most vainly and arrogantly pretended to it. Which because it may give more light into the greatest *antiquities* of *Greece*, and some other Nations than hath been yet discovered or taken notice of, and because it may further tend to clear the *truth* of the *Scriptures*, as to the *Origin* of *Nations*, I shall more particularly enquire into the first *Plantation* of *Greece*. That it was first inhabited by some of *Noah's posterity*, is out of question with all those who preferr the most *ancient* and undoubted *records* of *Scripture* before the fabulous impostures of men's brains. But by whose immediate posterity the *Country* of *Greece* was first inhabited, is not yet so clear as it hath been generally presumed to be, by most who had rather follow the dictates of others, than spend time in such enquiries themselves: Which yet certainly are so far from being unworthy men's labour and industry, that nothing tends more clearly to advance the truth of *Scripture-history*, than the reconciling the *antiquities* of the *elder Nations* to what we find delivered of the plantation of the world from the *posterity* of *Noah*. As to this particular therefore of the first *plantation* of *Greece*, I shall first propound the opinion generally embraced among learned men, and then shew how far it is defective, and what other more true account may be given of it. It is evident from *Mo-*

Sect. 10. 2.

ſes, Gen. 10. 5. that the poſterity of *Japhet* took poſſeſſion of the *Iſles* of the *Gentiles*, i. e. according to the *Hebrew Idiom*, not only ſuch as are properly ſo called, but all thoſe *Countries* which lay much upon the *Sea*, being at any diſtance from *Paleſtine*, eſpecially ſuch as lay between the *Ocean* and *Mediterranean Sea*; and ſo both *Greece* and *Italy* come under the name of the *Iſles* of the *Gentiles*. Among the ſons of *Japhet* none is conceived ſo probable to have firſt peopled *Greece*, as he whoſe name was preſerved among the *Inhabitants* of *Greece* with very little alteration. And ſo as the *Medes* from *Madai*, the *Aſſyrians* from *Aſſur*, the *Thracians* from *Thiras*, by the like *Analogy* the *Ionians* from *Javan*. From which it is obſervable, that although among the *Greeks* themſelves, the *Ionians* were but as one *diviſion* of that *people* which inhabited *Greece*, yet other Nations comprehended all under the name of *Ionians*. For which we have ſufficient evidence from *Heſychius* and the *Scholiaſt* on *Ariſtophanes*. Οἱ βάρβαροι τὸς Ἕλληνας Ἴωνας λέγουσιν, ſaith *Heſychius*; and more to this purpoſe the *Scholiaſt* ſpeaks. Πάντας τὸς Ἕλληνας Ἰάονας οἱ βάρβαροι ὀνόμαζον. For Ἰάονες with the *Inſertion* of the *Æolick Digamma* (which is always done when two Vowels meet) is Ἰάϝονες, i. e. *Javones*, and *Stephanus Byhantius* tells us, that from Ἰάων comes Ἰών, and ſo *Homer*,

Heſych. v. Ἴαονες. *Schol. in Ariſt. Acharnenſ.*

Stephanus de Urb. v. Ἰών.

Hom. l. ν. Ἔνθα ἥ Βοιωτοὶ καὶ Ἰάονες ἑλκεχίτωνες.

And *Dionyſius Periegetes* reckons up Ἰάων as one of the Rivers of *Arcadia*,

Dionyſ. v. 416. Ἔνθα μίλας ὄθι Κράθις ἵνα ῥέει ὕδατι Ἰάων.

And which much confirms this opinion, the *Hebrew word* for *Javan* before the points added by the *Maſorites*, *viz.* יון bears a perfect *Analogy* with the *Greek* Ἰών; and ארץ יון in *Scripture* is taken for *Greece*; and ſo *Dan.* 8. 21. *Alexander* is called מלך יון, which the LXX render βασιλεὺς ἑλλήνων; and *Joel* 3. 6. *You have ſold my ſons* לבני היונים *to the ſons of Javan*, i. e. to the *Greeks*, as it is generally underſtood. But as *Javan* cannot be ſuppoſed to have come into theſe parts without his *family*, ſo it is generally preſumed that there are no obſcure foot-ſteps left of *Javan*'s eldeſt ſon, *Eliſha*'s ſeating himſelf in *Greece*.

Greece. For from him *Josephus* derives the name Αἰολεῖς, with whom the *Jerusalem Paraphrast* concurrs. *Montanus* from thence derives the name *Elis*, from whence he supposeth the *Greeks* are called ἕλληνες. *Bochartus* finds the clearest remainders of *Elisha* in *Elis*, the same with *Peloponnesus*, one part of which by *Homer* is called *Aliſium*; thence *Ezek.* 27. 7. we read of the *purple and scarlet from the Isles of* Elisha, which makes it most probable to be that part of *Greece* which lay upon the *Ionian Sea*, where the best purple next to the *Tyrian* was found, as the *learned Bochartus* hath demonstrated from several Authors. This is now the substance of the generally-received account concerning the plantation of *Greece* from the posterity of *Noah*. Which if it be taken as to that *people* which did at length possess *Greece*, I see no reason to disapprove it; but if it be extended to the first *plantation* of *Greece*, I see as little to embrace it. That we may therefore judge more freely of the first Inhabitants of *Greece*, it is requisite we take an account of it from those who profess themselves most versed in their own *Antiquities*, who may in a matter of this nature which is attested by the common consent of the most learned *Antiquaries* of *Greece*, be the more credited, in that what they thus deliver, may be supposed to come from an ancient and undoubted *Tradition.*

Ar. Montan. Phaleg. p. 24.

Bochart. Phaleg. l. 3. cap. 10.

It is evident therefore, from the judgment of the most learned and judicious, even of the *Greeks* themselves, that *Greece* was first inhabited by a *people* by them called *Barbarous*, i.e. a people different from them in *language* and *manners.* So *Ephorus*, whom *Polybius* commends as the best Writer of the *Greek Antiquities*, saith that *Greece* was inhabited by a *barbarous people* before the *Hellens* came into it. And *Hecatæus Milesius* cited by *Strabo* concerning *Peloponnesus*, ὅτι πρὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ὤκησαν αὐτὴν βάρβαροι, which *Strabo* himself not only believes of *Peloponnesus*, but of all *Greece*, that it was κατοικία βαρβάρων τὸ πάλαιον, *anciently a Plantation of Barbarians*; the same is affirmed by *Aristotle* writing of the *Commonwealth* of the *Tegeates* concerning *Arcadia*, that before its being possessed by the *Arcadians*, it was inhabited by a *barbarous people*, who because they were expulsed their *Country* before *moon-rising*, the *Arcadians* called themselves προσέληνοι. Whether that be the ground of that *vain-glorious* boast (of which many

Sect. 11.

Geogr. l. 7.

V. Scholiast. in Apollonium, l. 4. v. 262.

many reaſons are given by learned men) I here diſpute not; it is ſufficient that we find the *Grecians* were not the firſt who peopled any of theſe ſeveral *places*; which is likewiſe atteſted by *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, and *others*, whoſe teſtimonies we ſhall afterwards produce. It being then evident that the *Grecians* were not the firſt who inhabited that Country after from them called *Greece*, it follows to be inquired what this *barbarous people* was, and from whence they came. *Strabo* hath given us in a large *Catalogue* of the names of many of them, as the *Dryopes*, *Caucones*, *Leleges*, beſides the *Aones*, *Tembices*, *Hyantes*, and many others; but theſe ſeem not to have been that ancient people, but rather ſome latter *Caſtlings* of the *Carians*, who, as *Thucydides* tells us, did very often make inroads upon the *quarters* of *Greece*. That people which had the largeſt ſpread, and greateſt *Antiquity*, was the *Pelaſgi*: thence *Peloponneſus* was anciently called Πελασγία. *Stephanus Byzantius* πελοποννήσου τρεῖς ὀνομασίαι, Ἀπία, Πελασγία and Ἀργός: and *Apollodorus* ſaith, that the *Peloponneſians* were anciently called *Pelaſgi*; and *Euripides*,

Πελασγιώτας ὠνομασμένους τὸ πεὶν
Δαναούς.

And elſewhere,

Πρῶτον Πελασγοὶ, Δαναΐδαι τὸ δεύτερον.

Geogr. l. 9. Theſe *Pelaſgi* were not only in *Peloponneſus*, but in *Attica* too, as appears by *Strabo*, where he ſaith the Nation of the *Pelaſgi* did inhabit, and by the *Athenians* (that is after their mixture) they were called πελαργοὶ, *Storks*, διὰ τὸ πλάνον for their frequent removals from place to place: and *Pauſanias* mentions their being under the *Acronoli* at *Athens*: that they were in *Theſſaly*, is evident from *Heſychius*. Πελασγοὶ οἱ Θεσσαλοὶ καὶ ἔθνος τῆς Βοιωτίας, καὶ ἡ ὑπὸ Πελασγῶ τῷ Ἀρκάδος κατοικουμένη πολυπλάνητον; *Arcadia* ſeems to have the *firſt* or *chief* place of their *reſidence*, for the *Arcadians* who were accounted παλαιότατα ἔθνη τῆς ἑλλήνων, do vindicate the founder of this *Nation*, whom they call *Pelaſgus*, to themſelves, and ſay he was an αὐτόχθων among them, that is, the firſt who came into that

that *Country*; for all those, whose Original they knew not, they called them *Terræ filios*, and *genuinos terræ*. *Pausanias* rightly conjectures that he was the first man among them, not as though he was alone, but because the *Chief Ruler* and *Commander* among them, and that brought them into the *Country*; but though they might fix themselves about *Arcadia*, it is evident they spread further; for *Menecrates Eleates* in his book of the *founders* of *Cities*, affirms that all the *Sea-coasts* of *Greece* called *Ionica*, beginning from *Myca*, were first inhabited by the *Pelasgi*; nay we find them yet much higher up in *Epirus*, who were, as *Strabo* tells us, the first founders of the famous Oracle of *Dodona*; for so *Ephorus* in him saith it was πλασγῶν ἵδρυμα, and that these were πρὸ πολλοῦ τῶν ἄλλων ἀνασεύντων ἀρχαιότατοι: thence the *Poet*,

In Arcad.

Strabo, l. 13.

Lib. 7.

Ζεῦ ἄνα Δωδωναῖε Πελασγικέ.

And *Hesiod*,

Δωδώνην φηγόντε Πελασγῶν ἵδρυσιν ἔσω.

Strabo further makes it evident, that they were a *barbarous people* which lived about *Dodona*, from the description *Homer* gives of them,

ἀμφὶ δ' Σελλοὶ
Σοὶ ναίουσ' ὑποφῆται, ἀνιπτόποδες χαμαιεῦναι.

Which *Philostratus* best interprets when he saith they were αὐτοχόδιοί πως καὶ ὅπως κατασκευασθέντες ἦσαν, *such that thought the Gods were best pleased with their simplicity and severity of life*, and therein far different from the *Grecian* humour. *Suidas* in *Thessalicis* (cited likewise by *Strabo*) saith that the *Temple* of *Dodona* was removed from *Scotusa* in *Pelasgia* to *Thessala*; which is confirmed by *Herodotus* in *Euterpe*, where he largely speaks of the *Temple* and *Oracle* at *Dodona*. These *Pelasgi* confined not themselves to *Greece* neither, but were dispersed into the neighbour *Islands*, as *Chios*, *Creet*, *Lesbos*, *Lemnos*, *Imbro*, *Samos*, as will appear afterwards; and at last came into *Italy*, as is well known, and are thought to be the same with the

In Imag.

the *Tyrrhenians*, and by ſome conceived to be the firſt *founders* of *Rome*. We ſee what a large ſpread the *Pelaſgi* had over *Greece*, which was divided after the *Hellens* began to appear, into τὸ πελασγικὸν and τὸ ἑλλωικὸν, as *Herodotus* witneſſeth; and ſo theſe two appear to be a very different *people* from one another, and not the ſame under different *names* as is commonly thought.

Sect. 12. Which ſufficiently appears from their language, which was quite different from one another. So *Herodotus* Ἦσαν οἱ Πελασγοὶ βάρβαρον γλῶσσαν ἱέντες, *they uſed a barbarous language: i. e.* a language not underſtood by the *Hellens*; who at firſt, had their chief *reſidence* in *Theſſaly*, from whence by degrees they came forwards into *Greece*, as *Thucydides* ſhews. For although the name of *Hellens* at laſt ſpread it ſelf over all the people of *Greece*, yet it was at firſt peculiar to that part of *Theſſaly* called *Pthiotis*, and thence *Homer* calls them properly *Hellens* which followed *Achilles* from thence; and it appears by *Homer* that *there* was a City there called Ἕλλας, which as *Stephanus de Urbibus* tells us was there built by Ἕλλην, although he will not have him to be *Hellen* the ſon of *Deucalion*, but the ſon *Pthius*, wherein he is miſtaken; For *Thucydides* plainly ſhews, that it was from *Hellen* the ſon of *Deucalion*, that the name Ἕλληνες came, and this *Hellen* lived in *Pthiotis*. But although they were firſt in *Pthiotis*, yet they daily increaſing in numbers and power, by degrees they got all *Theſſaly* into their hands, of which one part was called πελασγιῶτις; afterwards under *Dorus* the ſon of *Hellen* they conquered *Heſtiæotis*, that part of *Theſſaly* which lies under the Mountains *Oſſa* and *Olympus*; from thence they were beaten back by the *Cadmeans* into *Pindus*, where the *Greeks* were firſt called Μακεδνοὶ, as *Herodotus* tells us; from hence they went into *Dryopis*, and thence into *Peloponneſus*, and there had the name *Dorians*; but before their coming hither, they had firſt ſecured themſelves of the *Hellens* lying between *Theſſaly* and *Peloponneſus*, and there they diſpoſſeſt the *Pelaſgi* in all the *Attick region*; who were now forced to *ſubmit* or to *fly*; they who ſubmitted, as moſt of them did, were incorporated into the *Greeks*, and became one people with them, and ſo by degrees loſt that former *language* which was peculiar to themſelves and wholly diſtinct from the *Greek* tongue. That the *Hellens* did thus

thus gradually come into *Peloponnesus*, is evident from the names of *people* and *places* common to *Thessaly* and *Peloponnesus* which came from hence, that though the *Greeks* left the Cities behind them, yet they carried most of the names along with them. Thus the *Achæi*, *Ionians*, and *Æolians*, and *Dorians* in *Peloponnesus* came from those of the same *names* in *Thessaly*; and so likewise the names of these following *Regions* and *Cities* were common to both, as *Ellopia*, *Estiæa*, *Eretria*, and *Oropos*, *Graia*, *Larissa*, *Psophis*, *Iton*, *Oecalia* and very many others. *Salmasius* seems to be of opinion, that the *Pelasgi* never used any language distinct from the *Hellens*; but besides that it is directly contrary to the testimony of *Herodotus*, the arguments he produceth for it are very weak. The first is because the *Pelasgi* that went into *Italy*, did use the *Greek tongue*, from their calling *Agylla Cære*, from χεῖος, a word pronounced from one on the Walls; and because the *Arcades* used only the *Greek* language in the *Æolian Dialect*, which *Evander* carried with him into *Italy*, and from which most of the *old Roman language* was derived. But doth not *Herodotus* expressly say, that after the mixture between the *Greeks* and *Pelasgi* these by degrees lost their own proper *language* and made *use* of the common *Greek tongue*? Yet afterwards too it is evident from *Herodotus* in some places, as at *Crotona*, they did use a language different from the *Greek*. His other argument is, *that the names of the eldest persons mentioned were originally Greek*; but this is expressly denied by *Strabo* who makes the contrary one of his strongest arguments, that the *Barbarians* did anciently inhabit *Greece*; and instanceth in *Cecrops*, *Codrus*, *Æolus*, *Cothus*, *Drymas*, *Crimanus*. Thus we have abundantly proved against the common opinion, that *Greece* was not first peopled by the *Hellens*, or the posterity of *Elisa*, although these did afterwards come to the full possession of *Greece*.

De Hellen. p. 315.

Sect. 15. It remains that we shew whence these *Pelasgi* came, and of whose posterity they were, and what the *language* was which was used by them. He that gave the name to this people according to the *Grecian fables*, was one *Pelasgus*, which none will wonder at among them, whose constant custom it was, (partly by reason of their *Ignorance* of the true account of their names, and partly by their *pride* that they might not seem ignorant

norant of any thing) when they meet with any names of people, to find out ſome perſon near it who was the founder of them. Thus *Attica* from *Actæus*, it being anciently called Ακτικὴ, and *Cranae* from *Cranaus*, *Ægialea* from *Ægialeus*, *Mauritania* from *Maurus*, *Scythia* from one *Scythes*, *Galatæa* from *Galates*, and thus in multitudes of other names. But from the name *Pelaſgi* we may probably find out the true founder of the people, allowing that variation which is uſually cauſed through the *Greeks* melting the harſher words of the *Eaſtern* languages into a ſound fit for their more delicate palates, as is evident in the comparing the names of the Prophets in *Hebrew*, with what they are in the *Greek verſion*. Thus the *Pelaſgi* may with great probability be derived from פֶּלֶג, *Phaleg*; for which we have the concurrent teſtimony of two learned perſons, *Grotius* and *Salmaſius*, who are contented to mention it, without bringing much evidence of reaſon for it. What they only touch at, we ſhall endeavour to make out more at large; which we ſhall do by removing the great preſumptions againſt it, and laying down the probabilities for it. The great *preſumptions* lying againſt it are; for that the *Iſles* of the *Nations* fell to the poſterity of *Jepheth*, and that *Phaleg* lived with *Eber* in *Chaldæa*. For the firſt, it muſt be acknowledged that the greateſt part of the *Countries* lying upon the *Ocean* and *Mediterranean*, were in the time when *Moſes* wrote ſo inhabited; not that the habitations of the *ſons* of *Noah*, had their bounds and limits ſet them either by *God* or *Noah*, but that the poſterity of *Japhet* did chiefly addreſs themſelves to thoſe parts which lay towards *Europe*; but yet not ſo, as to exclude any of the *poſterity* of *Sem*, if their *neceſſities* for further *room* made it neceſſary for them to ſeek for habitations further abroad. For we can have no reaſon to think, that becauſe the chief of *Sem*'s poſterity did live together, therefore *none* of them went further off, which *neceſſity* would put them upon becauſe of their great *increaſe*; for we read of *Phaleg* and others, that beſides thoſe in direct line to *Abraham* (whoſe *Genealogy* it was *Moſes* his great deſign to recount) they begat many other *ſons* and *daughters*, which would make it neceſſary for them, to ſeek their *habitations* further abroad. And that *Phaleg* and *Ragau* did ſo, we have the expreſs teſtimony of *Epiphanius*, Φαλὲκ καὶ Ῥαγαῦ οἵτινες ἐπὶ

Grot. not. in lib. 1. de jur. bel. &c. Cap. 3. Sal. de Hellen.

Gen. 11. 19, 21.

ὅτι τὸ ἀπ' Ἐυρώπης πλῆμα γενεάτης τῆς τῆς Σκυθίας μέρει ἐγ τοῖς ἀνωθεν ἔθνεσι συνεκβάντα, ἀπὸ τῆς τῦ Θάρρα ἡλικίας, ἐγ ἐπίκτητα ἐξ ἔτερ οἱ Θρᾷκες γεγόνασι. *That from the age of* Therah *and thence forward* Phaleg *and* Ragau *diverted toward the Clime of Europe, to part of* Scythia, *and were joyned with those Nations from which the* Thracians *arose.* Several things make this not so improbable as some have imagined it to be; for first, it is the constant acknowledgment of all sober inquirers into the *original* of the *Greeks*, that *Greece* was first peopled from *Scythia*; and indeed almost all the *Nations* in *Europe* have come out of that *Country:* besides there is evidence of it, even in the *Grecian Fables*; for *Prometheus* (from whom the *Greeks* derived themselves) is fansied by them to lie bound in Mount *Caucasus*, which must be supposed to be the *Country* from whence he came. Again, it is evident already that the *Hellens* came not into *Greece* before it was peopled by the *Pelasgi*, and that these had different *language* and *customs* from one another; now then in all probability, although the posterity of *Elisa* might come first down from *Scythia* into those parts, and seat themselves in *Macedonia* and *Thessaly*, where they had in probability more than *room* enough at first and a Country to their desire: they might be willing to permit the *posterity* of *Phaleg* to pass on further; for in those first plantations we cannot otherwise conceive, but that the *last comers* must be the *furthest goers*; unless they had strength enough to drive the former *inhabitants* out of their *seats* whereof they were already possessed, as the *Scythians* did afterwards, and so the *Hellens:* So then the posterity of *Phaleg* being forced to quit their own Country because of the *multitude* of *inhabitants*, must be supposed to take that *course*, where in *probability* they might find an empty *seat* fit for them to dwell in; thence they come towards *Europe*; for they saw how the *posterity* of *Sem* did spread its self *Eastward* already, and *Cham Southward*, and coming to part of that vast Country of *Scythia*, which was both already taken up and not so convenient an *habitation* for them, they draw downwards towards *Thracia*, and there the posterity of *Thiras*, from whom the *Thracians* came, had already possessed themselves; passing further into *Thessaly*, they find that already planted by some of the *posterity* of *Elisa*, but as yet but scant and thin of inhabitants; therefore they disperse themselves

De Scythis, & ad Acu. & Paulum.

up and down through ſome part of *Epirus*, moſt part of *Ellas*, and ſome paſs into *Peloponneſus*, where they fix themſelves chiefly upon *Arcadia*, and thence ſpread up and down by *degrees* towards the *Sea-ſide*; for we cannot but think that the *Maritime parts* were the laſt peopled, partly for *fear* of another *deluge*, partly for want of *conveniency* of *Navigation*, moſt of their travels being by *Land*; and partly when *Navigation* grew more in *uſe for fear of Pirates*, who drove a great trade upon the *Coaſts* of *Greece* in elder times, as is moſt evident from *Thucydides* in the beginning of his Hiſtory. Thus we have a reaſonable account given of the *Pelaſgi* their firſt coming into *Greece*, and how by degrees the *Hellens* came to poſſeſs their Country, and what a fair pretence the *Arcadians* had to boaſt of the greateſt *antiquity*, their Country being probably firſt peopled by the *Pelaſgi* of any part of the whole *Cherſoneſe*, and the ſeat of the leader of the whole company whom they call *Pelaſgus*, and the Scriptures *Phaleg*.

Sect. 14. Having thus far cleared the *Antiquities* of *Greece* as to the firſt *planters* of it, whom we have evidenced to have been the *Pelaſgi*, and theſe derived from *Peleg*, it will be no great difficulty to reſolve what *language* they brought along with them, which muſt be ſuppoſed to be the ſame with that uſed in the *family* from whence *Peleg* or *Phaleg* came, as to the ſubſtance of it, although it might admit as great variation of *Dialect* from it as the *Chaldee* or *Syriack* doth. But this I will not only ſuppoſe, but offer theſe probabilities for the proof of it; the firſt is, the *agreement* of the ancient *Greek* language with the *Hebrew* in many of its primitive words; and here we have a moſt rational and probable account given of it; which is, the *Greeks* mixing with the *Pelaſgi*, and both coming to be one people, they muſt needs retain many of the old words uſed by the *Pelaſgi* in their *Greek* language; which are evidently of an *Eaſtern* extraction, the ground of which cannot with ſuch probability be fetched from *Cadmus* and the *Phœnicians*, becauſe it is not ſo eaſie admiſſion of a foreign Language after the *perfection* of their own, unleſs by long tract of time, or great numbers over-running the former people, neither of which can be ſo truly affirmed of *Cadmus* and his company; for they were ſoon driven out of *Greece*, he himſelf ending his days in *Illiricum*, neither was their ſpread ſo large as

as that of the *Pelasgi*, who were before possessors of the Country; and it is continually seen how impossible it is for any Conquerors, as the *Greeks* were, to bring their own language so into a place, where some of the former people are suffered to live, and not to retain many of their old *words* among them, and so make the Language mixt of both, as it is in all Nations conquered by the *Romans*; the *Roman* not being purely spoken by any, but corrupted with a *mixture* of the former Language in use among them. The second argument is from the different *pronunciation* and *dialects* in *use* in the *Greek language*; of which no account so likely can be given, as the mixture with different *Languages*. This is most evident in the *Dorick Dialect*; for the *Dorians* inhabiting probably where most of the *Pelasgi* had been, their *pronunciation* and *dialect* comes the nearest to the *Eastern* of any of the *Greeks*: For in the *Dorick Dialect* the πλατυασμὸς or *broad pronunciation*, is most taken notice of: So he in *Theocritus* upbraids the *Dorians*, ὅτι πλατυάδιστον ἄπασα, they speak every thing *very broad*; which answers to the pronunciation of the *Eastern Languages*; besides, the *Dorick Dialect* delights much in adding *a* to the end of words, which besides that it is the custom of *Eastern Tongues*, especially the *Syriack*, it doth much widen the pronunciation. The third Argument is from the *remainders* of the *Eastern Tongues* in those places, especially where the *Pelasgi* had been. The *Pelasgi* are much taken notice of for their frequent *removes* and *travelling* from one place to another; which I suppose was chiefly after the *Hellens* had conquer'd the *Country* where they dwelt, then they were forced to go seek better habitations abroad; thence *Strabo* calls the *Nation* of the *Pelasgi* πολύπλανον καὶ ταχὺ τὸ ἔθνος πρὸς ἁπασασ- *Lib.* 5.
σίς: and elsewhere that they were πολλαχοῦ τῆς οἰκουμένης τὸ παλαιὸν πλανώμενοι, they went up and down to a great part of *Lib.* 12.
Europe; but we may suppose them to have made their first and chief resort to the neighbour *Islands* to *Greece*; where we shall see what evidence they left of their *language* there. The first *Island* we meet with them in, is *Creete*; so *Strabo* speaking of them, καὶ δὴ τῆς Κρήτης ἔποικοι γεγόνασιν, ὡς φησὶν Ὅμηρος; *Lib.* 5.
that a *Colony* of them lived in *Creete*, for which he voucheth *Homer*'s authority:

Odyſſ. τ. 175. Ἄλλη δ' ἄλλων γλῶσσα μεμιγμένη, ἐν μὲν Ἀχαιοὶ,
Ἐν δ' Ἐτεόκρητες μεγαλήτορες, ἐν δὲ Κυδῶνες,
Δωριέες τε τριχάϊκες, δῖοί τε Πελασγοί.

It is evident then that the *Pelaſgi* were in *Creete*. Now moſt of the *Cretan* words are of an *Eaſtern extraction*, if we believe the learned *Bochartus*, who hath promiſed a diſcourſe on that ſubject; beſides *Creete* we find the *Pelaſgi* in *Chios*, De Phæn. Col. l. 1. c. 15. ἣν χίοι δ' ἰδίως ἑαυτῶν Πελασγούς φασι τοὺς ἐκ Θετταλίας, ſaith *Strabo*, the Inhabitants of *Chios* ſay that the *Pelaſgi* of *Theſſaly* were their firſt Inhabitants; and here the fore-named learned *perſon* hath derived the Name *Chios*, the Mountain *Pelinæus*, and the Wine *Arviſium*, all from the *Eaſtern languages*. The Lib. 1. c. 9. next we find them in, is *Lesbos*, ἣν δὲ τὸ Λέσβον Πελασγίαν εἰρήκασι, which from them was called *Pelaſgia*, ſaith *Strabo*, whoſe name is likewiſe fetched out of the *Eaſt*. By *Bochartus* further we find them in *Lemnos* and *Imbros*: ſo *Anticlides* in Geogr. p. 2. l. 1. c. 12. *Strabo*, φησὶ Πελασγοὺς τὰ περὶ Λῆμνον Ἴμβρον κτῆσαι; concerning whoſe names, ſee *Bochartus* 82. I know that learned Author makes the *Phœnicians* the *Authors* of all theſe *names*, from no other ground generally, but becauſe they are of an *Eaſtern derivation*; but according to what we have laid down, we may yield to the thing it ſelf, and upon clearer grounds; for of ſome of theſe *Iſlands* he ingenuouſly confeſſeth he can find no evidence of the *Phœnicians* being in them. *Phœnices* Lib. 1. c. 9. *in his Inſulis habitaſſe nuſquam legimus*: but we find it very plain, that in thoſe very *Iſlands* the *Pelaſgi* inhabited; and whether account then be more probable, let the Reader judge. One thing more I ſhall inſiſt on, which is the Original of the *Samothracian Myſteries*: That theſe were as to their *names* from the *Eaſtern languages*, is now acknowledged by all *learned* men, the *Cabiri* being ſo evidently derived from כביר, which ſignifies *ſtrength* and *power*, i. e. the *Dii potes*, ſo *Cabiri* is explained by *Varro* and *Tertullian*, and the particular *names* of De ſpect. c. 8. Lib. 1. c. 12. the ſeveral *Cabiri* mentioned by the *Scholiaſt* on *Apollonius*, Ἀξιερὸς, Ἀξιόκερσα, Ἀξιόκερσος and Κάδμιλος are very handſomly explained by that learned and excellent *Bochartus* from the *Eaſtern languages*; only he will needs have them derived from the *Phœnicians*, whereas *Herodotus* expreſly tells us that they were

were from the *Pelasgi*, whose words are these; ὅτι δ' τὰ Καβείρων ὄργια μεμύηται τὰ Σαμοθρᾴκων παντελῶς λαβόντες ἀφ' Πελασγῶν: And again, τῷ δὲ Σαμοθρᾳκίῳ δοκεῖν πρέπειν Πελασγὸν ὅτι που παρ' Ἀθηναίοις γένοιτο ἐγνωσμένον, ἢ ἀφ' οὗπερ Σαμοθρᾷκες τὰ ὄργια ἐδιδάξαντο. We see evidently by this, that the *Samothracians* derived their Mysteries from the *Pelasgi*; and without all question they had their *names* from thence, whence they derived their *Mysteries*: And to this purpose it is further observable, that as the old *Hetrurians* were certainly a *Colony* of the *Pelasgi*, upon their removal out of *Greece*; so *Vossius* observes that the old *Hetruscan language* (*fere à Syris habet cuncta sacrorum nomina*) hath almost all the sacred *appellations* from the *Eastern tongues*. For which purpose it is further observable, which *Grotius* takes notice of, that the *jus pontificum Romanorum* was taken a great part from the *Hetrusci*, and the *Hetrurians* had it *ab Hebræis* out of the Eastern parts.

Lib. 2. *De Idol. l.* 2. *c.* 57. *Annot. in* Mat. 12. 1.

Sect. 15.

By all which I cannot conceive but this opinion, notwithstanding its *novelty*, is advanced to as high a degree of probability, as any that stands on the like foundations; and not only so, but it is an excellent *clue* to direct us to the *Labyrinth* of *Antiquities*, and gives us a fair account whence the *Eastern Tongues* came to be so much used among both the ancient *Greeks* and *Hetrurians*. One thing more this will help us to understand far better than any *salvo* hath been yet used for it; which is the affinity spoken of by *Arius* King of *Lacedæmon* in his Letters to *Onias*, between the *Jews* and *Lacedæmonians*: εὑρέθη ἐν γραφῇ περί τε τῶν Σπαρτιατῶν καὶ Ἰουδαίων ὅτι εἰσὶν ἀδελφοὶ καὶ ὅτι εἰσὶν ἐκ γένους Ἀβραάμ: which is explained by *Josephus* thus: ἐντυχόντες γραφῇ τινι, εὑρομεν ὡς ὑπὲρ ἐνὸς ὄντων Ἰουδαίων καὶ Λακεδαιμονίων ἐκ τῆς περὶ Ἀβραὰμ οἰκειότητος: *They had found in a book that the* Jews *and* Lacedæmonians *were of the same stock, from their mutual relation to* Abraham. *Vossius* thinks the Original of this was from those of the posterity of *Anak*, who came into *Greece*, and peopled *Sparta*, and would seem to have been of the posterity of *Abraham*; or that they were partly of the *posterity* of *Abraham* by *Agar* or *Ceturah*, and partly of the *Canaanites* driven out by *Joshua*: But how unlikely a thing is it (supposing *Sparta* peopled by the *Canaanites*, which yet is not evident) that they should give out themselves to be of that

1 Maccab. 12. 21. *Antiq. l.* 13 *c.* 9. *De Idol. l.* 1. *c.* 13.

that *ſtock* which they had been expelled their Country by? And for the true poſterity of *Abraham* coming thither, as we have no ground for it but the bare aſſertion, ſo we have this ſtrong evidence againſt it, that all that came from *Abraham* were circumciſed, as the *Iſhmaëlites*, *Hagarens*, &c. which we never read of among the *Lacedæmonians*. *H. Grotius* differs not much from the opinion of *Voſſius* concerning the ground of this kindred between the *Jews* and *Spartans*: For in his notes on that place in the *Maccabees*, where it is ſpoken of, he gives this account of it. The *Dorians*, of whom the *Spartans* were a part, came from the *Pelaſgi*; the language of the *Pelaſgi* was different from that of the *Greeks*, as appears by *Herodotus* in his *Clio*: Ἦσαν οἱ Πελασγοὶ βάρβαρον γλῶσσαν ἱέντες. Now the *Pelaſgi* (ſaith he) are פלגי *diſperſi*, a *ſcattered Nation*; thence he ſuppoſeth theſe *Pelaſgi* or baniſhed people, to have come from the Confines of *Arabia* and *Syria*, in which the *poſterity* of *Abraham* and *Ceturah* had placed themſelves. But 1. it is uncertain whether the poſterity of *Abraham* by *Keturah* were placed ſo near *Canaan* or no. I know *Junius* endeavours to find the ſeat of all the ſons of *Ceturah* in *Arabia*; but *Mercer* gives ſeveral not improbable reaſons why he conceives them placed not in the *Eaſt* of *Canaan*, but in the *Eaſtern parts* of the world. 2. We have no evidence at all of any remove of theſe *ſons* of *Abraham* by *Ceturah* out of the parts of *Arabia*, ſuppoſing them placed there; nor any reaſon why they ſhould be baniſhed thence. 3. That which was the *badge* of *Abraham*'s poſterity, was never that we read of in *uſe* among the *Spartans*, which was *Circumciſion*. Indeed in much later Ages than this we ſpeak of, we read of a people among the *Thracians* who were circumciſed, whom the *Greeks* themſelves judged to be *Jews*. So *Ariſtophanes* brings the *Odomantes* in Τὶς τῶν Ὀδομάντων τὸ πέος ἀποτέθεικεν ἀντ' ἀποτέθεικεν (ſaith the *Scholiaſt*) i. e. ἀντὶ τίλλον, ἐλαύνοντο γὰρ καὶ ἀπετίλλοντο οἱ θρᾷκες τὰ αἰδοῖα καὶ ἀποσυρόμενα εἶχεν αὐτά. Whereby it is plain that Circumciſion was in uſe among the *Thracians*; for theſe *Odomantes* were (ſaith the *Scholiaſt*) a people of *Thrace*. φασὶ δ' αὐτοὺς Ἰουδαίους εἶναι. It ſeems it was a tradition among them that they were *Jews*. If ſo, it ſeems moſt probable that they were ſome of the *ten Tribes* who were placed about *Colchis*, and the adjacent places: For *Herodotus* in *Euterpe* ſaith, that the

Athenæus. Lib. 1. *ſ.* 4.

the *Syrians* that lived about the Rivers *Thermodon* and *Parthenius*, learned Circumcision from the *Colchi*, of whom he saith, Μόνοι πάντων Κόλχοι καὶ Αἰγύπτιοι καὶ Αἰθίοπες ἀπεταμήνατο ἀπ' ἀρχῆς τὰ αἰδοῖα. *Only the* Colchi, *and* Ægyptians, *and* Ethiopians *had originally the custom of Circumcision.* Or else these *Odomantes* might be some of the dispersed *Jews* in *Armenia*, where *Strabo* mentions a *Region* called *Odomantis*, and so they retained the name of the place from whence they came, after their removal into *Thrace*. But what-ever these *Odomantes* were, they were far enough from the *Spartans*, who never were thus suspected of *Judaism*, nor laught at for *Circumcision*. So that this opinion of *Grotius* on that account seems not very probable. *Bochartus*, who hath been so happy in many other conjectures, yet here gives out, unless it may depend upon the testimony of *Claudius Iolaus* in *Stephanus Byzantius*, who fabulously derives the *Jews* from one *Judæus Sparton*, who went from *Thebes* along with *Bacchus* into the Wars; which *Sparton* they might confound with another *Sparton*, the Son of *Phonoreus*, the Founder of *Sparta*; which yet is rejected as a Fable by *Pausanias* in *Laconicis*. Surely the *Lacedæmonians* were very ambitious of *kindred* with the *Jews*, that would claim it upon such grounds as these, especially at such a time when the people of the *Jews* were under distress, and their *kindred* might be like to cost them so dear; And if they had never such a mind to have claimed *kindred* with the *Jews*, they would certainly have done it upon a more plausible testimony than the Fable of one *Claudius Iolaus*, that had neither sence nor reason in it; and yet supposing his *Fable* true, it had been nothing to the purpose, without the linking another *Fable* to it, which was so gross, that even the *Greeks* themselves were ashamed of it, who were always the most daring forgers of *Fables* in the world. But let us see further what the *Divine* (as some have loved to call him) *Joseph. Scaliger* saith to it: All that he saith, is only a wonder or two at it: *Quid magis mirum quàm Lacedæmonios ab Abraham prognatos esse, &c.* and a refutation of an absurd opinion, that *Oebalus* the Father of *Tyndareus*, and Grandfather of *Castor*, *Pollux*, and *Helena*, was the same with *Ebal*, mentioned *Gen.* 10. 28. which there can be no reason for, since *Ebal* was the Son of *Joktan*, and so of another race from *Abraham*; and *Joktan*'s

Geogr. l. 11.

De Phœnic. Col. l. 1. *c.* 22.

Canon. Isag. p. 332.

Sons

Sons were placed *Eaſtward*, but chiefly *Oebalus* was within an hundred years before the deſtruction of *Troy*; but *Phaleg* Unkle to *Ebal*, died 664 years before *Oebalus* in *A. M.* 1993. Thus far then we cannot find any plauſible account of this claim of *kindred*: but though it be an endleſs task to make good all the claims of *kindred* in the world, eſpecially to perſons of power and authority, yet there being no viſible intereſt or deſign which the *Spartans* could have in ſuch a claim, eſpecially at that time with a Nation generally hated and maligned by Heathen *Idolaters*, we cannot ſuppoſe but there muſt be ſome at leaſt plauſible ground for ſuch a perſuaſion among them. What if we ſhould conjecture that the *Spartans* might find in the *Greek* verſion of the *Pentateuch*, which was much ſpread abroad at that time among the Sons of *Iſhmael*, one whoſe name makes the neareſt approach to their *Cadmus*, from whom they ſuppoſe themſelves derived; for the youngeſt of *Iſhmael*'s Sons was called *Kedemah*, Gen. 25. 15. which the *Syriack* renders *Kedem*, the very name of *Cadmus* in the *Eaſtern Tongues*. But this being a light conjecture, I paſs it by, and return to the ſubject of our diſcourſe, which gives a plauſible account of the ground of this *kindred*. We have already ſhewed that the *Pelaſgi* were the firſt who peopled *Greece*, (χ' τὴν Ἑλλάδα πᾶσαν ἐπεπίλασαν, is *Strabo*'s expreſſion of that Nation, that it ſpread over all *Greece*,) and withall it appears that the chief Seat of the *Pelaſgi* was in *Arcadia*, to which next adjoyns *Laconia*; and therefore in all probability was peopled by them; and beſides, the *Dorians* ſprang from the *Pelaſgi*, and the *Spartans* were a part of the *Dorians*, as appears already out of *Grotius*; ſo that what *kindred* the *Pelaſgi* had, was derived down to the *Spartans*; and we have manifeſted that theſe *Pelaſgi* were from *Phaleg*, and the Scripture
Gen. 11. 17, 18. tells us that *Phaleg* was the Son of *Eber*, from whom *Abraham* came in a direct and lineal ſucceſſion. And thus the *Jews* coming from *Abraham*, and the *Spartans* by the *Pelaſgi* from *Phaleg*, they both came out of the ſame *ſtock*: For ſo *Joſephus* expreſſeth it, not that the *Lacedæmonians* came from *Abraham*, but that the *Jews* and *they* were both ἐξ ἑνὸς γένους, *out of the ſame ſtock, and both had relation* to *Abraham*; the *Jews* as coming in a direct line, the *Spartans* as deriving from *Phaleg*, from whom *Abraham* came. And thus much may now ſuffice

fice to clear the first Plantation of *Greece*, and to shew how consonant it is to sacred *Scripture*; which I have taken the more pains in, because of the serviceableness of this discourse to that end, and to shew what *use* may be made of this kind of *Learning*, for vindicating the honour of the *sacred Scriptures*.

The only thing remaining as to the *Origin* of *Nations*, is the peopling of that vast *Continent* of *America*, which I cannot think we have yet sufficient *information*, either concerning the *passages* thither, especially *East* and *North*, or concerning any *records* the *Indians* have among themselves absolutely to determine any thing in it. It seems most probable that the several parts of it were peopled at *several times*, and from several *parts*, especially *North* and *East*; but to go about absolutely to determine from what *Nation*, in what *Age*, by what *means* they were first peopled, were a piece of as great confidence as ignorance, 'till we have more certain discoveries of it. I chuse therefore rather to referr the Reader to the bandyings of this Controversie in the many Writers about it, than to undertake any thing as to the decision of it. Only in the general it appears from the remaining tradition of the *Flood*, and many Rites and Customs used among them, that they had the same original with us, and that there can be no argument brought against it from themselves, since some *Authors* tell us, that the eldest *Accounts* and *Memoires* they have, do not exceed 800 years backward; and therefore their *Testimony* can be of no *validity* in a matter of so great *Antiquity*, as the *Origin* of *Nations* is.

Vi. Grotium Joh. de Laet. Horn. de Orig. Gent. Americ.

V. Manasse Ben. Israel. Spes. Israelit. Et Spizzel. de Israelitis Americanis.

CHAP. V.

Of the Origin of the Heathen Mythology.

That there were ſome remainders of the ancient hiſtory of the World preſerved in the ſeveral Nations after the diſperſion. How it came to be corrupted: by decay of knowledge, increaſe of Idolatry, confuſion of languages. An enquiry into the cauſe of that. Difficulties againſt the common opinion that languages were confounded at Babel. *Thoſe difficulties cleared. Of the fabulouſneſs of Poets. The particular ways whereby the Heathen Mythology aroſe. Attributing the general hiſtory of the World to their own Nation. The corruption of* Hebraiſms. *Alteration of names. Ambiguity of ſence in the Oriental languages. Attributing the actions of many to one perſon, as in* Jupiter, Bacchus, *&c. The remainders of Scripture-hiſtory among the Heathens. The names of God,* Chaos, *formation of man among the* Phœnicians. *Of* Adam *among the* Germans, Ægyptians, Cilicians. Adam *under* Saturn. Cain *among the* Phœnicians. Tubal-Cain *and* Jubal *under* Vulcan *and* Apollo. Naamah *under* Minerva. Noah *under* Saturn, Janus, Prometheus *and* Bacchus. Noah's *three ſons under* Jupiter, Neptune, *and* Pluto. Canaan *under* Mercury, Nimrod *under* Bacchus, Magog *under* Prometheus. *Of* Abraham *and* Iſaac *among the* Phœnicians. Jacob's *ſervice under* Apollo's. *The flight from* Bethel. Joſeph *under* Apis. Moſes *under* Bacchus. Joſhua *under* Hercules. Balaam *under the old* Silenus.

Sect. 1. THE main particulars contained in the *Scriptures* concerning the Hiſtory of *Ancient Times* being thus far cleared, there remains only that *evidence* which there is of the *truth* of the hiſtorical *part* of thoſe eldeſt times, in thoſe *foot-ſteps* of it which are contained in the *Heathen Mythology*. For we cannot conceive, that ſince we have manifeſted that all mankind did come from the poſterity of *Noah*, that all thoſe *paſſages* which concerned the *Hiſtory* of the World, ſhould be preſently *obliterated* and extinguiſhed among them, but ſome *kind* of *tradition* would be ſtill preſerved, although by degrees

it

it would be so much altered for want of certain *records* to preserve it in, that it would be a hard matter to discover its *original* without an exact comparing it with the true *History* it self from whence it was first taken. For it fared with this *Tradition* of the first ages of the world, as with a person who hath a long time travelled in foreign parts, who by the variety of *Climes* and *Countries* may be so far altered from what he was, that his own *relations* may not know him upon his return, but only by some certain *marks* which he hath in his body, by which they are assured, that however his *complexion* and *visage* may be altered, yet the person is the same still. Thus it was in this *original tradition* of the world; through its continual passing from one age to another, and the various humours, tempers, and designs of men, it received strange *disguises* and alterations as to its outward *favour* and *complexion*; but yet there are some such certain *marks* remaining on it, by which we find out its true original. Two things then will be the main subject of our enquiry here. 1. *By what means the original tradition came to be altered and corrupted.* 2. *By what marks we may discern its true original*, or what evidences we have of the remainders of *Scripture-history* in the *Heathen Mythology.*

1. Concerning the *means* whereby the *Tradition* by degrees came to be *corrupted*. There may be some more general, and others more particular. The general causes of it were; *Sect.* 2.

1. The gradual *decay* of *knowledge* and increase of *Barbarism* in the world; occasioned by the want of certain *records* to preserve the ancient History of the World in: Which we at large discoursed of in our entrance on this subject. Now in the decay of knowledge, there must needs follow a sudden and strange *alteration* of the memory of former times, which hath then nothing to preserve it, but the most uncertain report of *fame*, which alters and disguiseth things according to the *humours*, and *inclinations*, and *judgments* of those whose hands it passeth through. *Book* 1. *c.* 1. *Sect.* 16.

2. The gradual increase of *Idolatry* in the world: which began soon after the dispersion of *Nations*, and in whose age, we cannot at so great a distance and in so great obscurity precisely determine; but as soon as *Idolatry* came in, all the ancient *tradition* was made subservient in order to that end; and those per-

ſons whoſe *memories* were preſerved in ſeveral Nations, by degrees came to be *worſhipped* under diverſities of names; and ſuch things were annexed to the former *traditions* as would tend moſt to advance the greateſt *ſuperſtition* in the world.

3. The *Confuſion* of *Languages* at *Babel*, was one great reaſon of corrupting the ancient *tradition* of the world. For in ſo great variety (as ſuddenly happened) of *Languages* in the world, it cannot be conceived but ſuch things which might be preſerved in ſome uniform manner, had all Nations uſed the ſame *language*, would through the diverſity of *Idioms* and *Properties* of ſeveral Tongues be ſtrangely altered and diſguiſed, as will appear afterwards. This *alteration* of *Languages* in the world upon the confuſion of Tongues at *Babel*, brought as great a confuſion into the original tradition, as it did among thoſe who were the deſigners of that work.

Sect. 3. And becauſe this *ſubject* of the *original* and cauſe of this diverſity of *languages* among men, doth both tend to explain the preſent ſubject, and to clear the truth of *Scripture-hiſtory*, I ſhall a little further enquire into it. Chiefly on this account, becauſe it is pretended that ſuch a *confuſion* is needleſs which is delivered in *Scripture*, for the producing ſuch diverſities of languages, which would ariſe through mere length of time, and the varieties of *Climes* and *Cuſtoms* in the world. But if we only ſpeak concerning the ſence of *Moſes* about it, the enquiry is of greater difficulty than at firſt view it ſeems to be. For it is pretended that *Moſes* no-where ſpeaks of a *diverſity* of *languages*, as we underſtand it, but only of a *confuſion* of their ſpeech who were at *Babel*, which might well be, although they all uſed the ſame language; that is, there might be a confuſion raiſed in their minds, that they could not underſtand one another; their *notions* of things being diſturbed, ſo that though they heard one word, they had different *apprehenſions* of it: ſome thinking it ſignified one thing and ſome another: as *Julius Scaliger* tells us that the *Jews* he had converſed with, did not underſtand by it a *multiplication* of Tongues; but only by that *confuſion* their former *notions* of things by the ſame *words* were altered. As if one called for אבן a *ſtone*, one by that word underſtands *lime*, another *water*, another *ſand*, &c. this muſt needs produce a ſtrange *confuſion* among them, and enough to make them deſiſt from their work. But ſuppoſing no ſuch diviſion of *languages* there,

V. Mer. Caſaub. de 4. linguis p. 3. &c.

Exercit. in Cordan. 259 ſect. 1.

there, yet after their *dispersion*, which might be caused by the former *confusion*, by the different *Laws*, *Rites*, and *Customs*, *Commerce*, and *Trading*, and Tract of *Time*, there would have risen a division of their several Tongues. But if there were such a *division* of *Tongues* miraculously caused there (that as it is commonly said, all those who were of the same language, went together in their several companies) whence comes it to pass, that in their *dispersion* we read of several families dispersed, which used the same language after their dispersion? as all the sons of *Canaan* mentioned, *Gen.* 10.15,16,17,18. used the *Canaanitish* tongue: in *Greece*, *Javan* and *Elisa* had the same language. In *Ægypt*, *Misraim* and *Pathrusim*; in *Arabia* the sons of *Joktan* and *Chus*; in *Chaldæa Aram* and *Uz* the inhabitants of *Syria*, *Mash* of *Mesopotamia*, *Nimrod* of *Babylon*, *Assur* of *Assyria*: whence comes it to pass if their several Tongues were the *cause* of their *dispersion*, that these several *heads* of *families* should use the same *tongue*? Another *reason* against the common opinion, is this, which seems to have a great deal of force in it. If *tongues* were divided at *Babel* as it is imagined; whence was it, that the nearer any *Nation* lay to those who had the primitive language the *Hebrew*, they did participate more of that *tongue* than those who were more remote, as is plain in the *Chaldeans*, *Canaanites*, *Greeks*, and others? whereas if their *languages* were divided at *Babel*, they would have retained their own languages as well as others. This very argument prevailed so far with the learned *Is. Casaubon*, as appears by his *adversaria* on this subject (published by the learned Doctor's son) as to make him leave the common opinion, and to conclude the several *tongues* to be only some *variations* from the *Hebrew*, but yet so as many new words were invented too. Hence he observes that the *Asiatick Greeks* came nearer to the *Hebrew* than the *European*. And if this opinion hold true, it is the best foundation for deriving other *languages* from the *Hebrew*: a thing attempted by the same learned *person*, as you may see in the book fore-cited, and endeavoured by *Guichardus*, *Avenarius* and others. Thus we see there is no agreement in men's minds concerning the division of *tongues* at *Babel*.

Diatrib. de L. Heb. p. 17, 18.

Pag. 47.

But having set down this opinion with its reasons, I shall not so leave the received *opinion*, but shall first see what may be said for that, and leave the judgment concerning the probability

Sect. 4.

bability of either to the understanding Reader. And it seems to be grounded on these reasons. 1. That had it been left to men's own *choice*; there cannot be a sufficient reason assigned of the diversity of *languages* in the world. For there being one *language* originally in the world, whereby men did represent their *conceptions* to one another; we cannot imagine that men should of themselves introduce so great an *alteration*, as whereby to take off that necessary society and converse with each other, which even nature it self did put men upon. Hence *Calvin* and others conclude that *prodigii loco habenda est linguarum diversitas*; because there having been that freedom of converse among men, it is not to be supposed they should of themselves, cut it off to their mutual disadvantage. But to this it is said, *that the long tract of time and diversity of customs might alter the language.* I grant it *much*, but not *wholly*; and they would only therein differ in their languages, wherein their *customs* differed: so that there would remain still such an *agreement* as whereby they might understand each other; which it will be hard to find in many of the eldest *languages*. As for the *length of time*, though that doth alter much in reference to *words* and *phrases*, in which that of *Horace* holds true, *Multa renascentur quæ jam cecidere, &c.* Yet it will be yet more difficult to find where mere length of time hath brought a whole *language* out of *use*, and another in the *room* of it. But that which I think deserves well to be considered, is this, that the greatest *alteration* of *languages* in the world hath risen from *Colonies* of Nations that used another language; and so by the mixture of both together the language might be much altered: as the *Hebrew* by the *Chaldees* in *Babylon*: the *Spanish*, *Italian* and others by the *Latin*, as *Breerwood* shews, our own by the *Normans* and others. So that were there not a diversity of *languages* supposed, this *enterfering* of people would bring no considerable alteration along with it, no more than a *Colony* from *New England* would alter our language here. And as for another cause assigned of the *change* of languages, the *difference* of *climates*, which *Bodin* gives as the reason why the *Northern* people use *consonants* and *aspirates* so much, especially the *Saxons*, and those that live by the *Baltick* Sea who pronounce thus, *Per theum ferum pibimus penum finum.*

Annot. in Gen. 11. 1, 2.

Enquiries, c. 5, 6.

Method. hist. c. 9.

And

And so *R. D. Kimchi* observes of the *Ephraimites*, Judg. 12. 6. that it was the Air that was the cause of their *lisping*, and calling it *Sibboleth*, as he there observes of the men of *Sarphath*, that is, the *French*, that they could not pronunce *Schin*, but pronounced it like *Thau Raphe*. But by these *examples* we see that this would cause only an *alteration* as to some *letters* and *syllables*, and rather as to the *pronunciation*, than any *variety* of the *language*. So that we see that, setting aside the *confusion* of *languages* at *Babel*, there can be no reason sufficient assigned for the variety of languages in the world, 2. Though it be granted, that a confusion in their minds without distinct *languages* were enough to make them desist from their work, yet the *context* in that place, *Gen.* 11. doth inferr a diversity of *tongues*, as will appear from the *antecedents* and *consequents*; as from the first verse, where it is not conceivable why it should be there taken notice of as such a remarkable circumstance, that then they had but *one language* before they set upon this *work*, if there was not a *diversity* of *tongues* caused by the work they went about; but especially *ver.* 6. where God takes such notice of this very thing, that they had *but one language*, wherein they were so confident to carry on their work; therefore, *ver.* 7. when he would destroy their *work* by *confounding their language*, it must be by *multiplying* that *language* into many more; for it must be taken in opposition to what is said in the other verse. And what is there added, *their not understanding one anothers speech*, seems to referr not to their inward *conceptions*, as though they did not understand one anothers *minds*, but to the outward *expressions*, as שבוח doth apparently relate to them further in *ver.* 8. this is set down as the cause of their *dispersion*, which had the tongue been the same afterwards as it was before, could have been no reason for it. Again some argue from the name *Babel* given to the place, from בלל, which signifies to *confound* and mingle things of several *kinds* together. So used *Judg.* 19. 21. *Esay* 30. 24. *Job* 6. 5. *&c.* thence the name בבל for בלבל the middle ל left out, as in *Golgotha* for *Golgoltha*, *Kigaltha* for *Kilkaltha*, and others of a like nature. Besides, there seems to be somewhat in what is said, *that the families were divided according to their tongues*, Genes. 10. 5, 20, 31. which doth at least imply, a *diversity* of *tongues* among them, the

Mayer. Prodr. Chaldaism, c. 1.

the cauſe of which muſt be aſſigned by them who will not allow of the *confuſion* and *diviſion* of *languages* at *Bâbel*. Further, this ſeems moſt agreeable to *God's end* in making of them thus leave off their work, that there might be not only a preſent judgment upon them, but that which might remain to *poſterity* as a note of the folly of their *Anceſtors*. Thoſe who recede from the common opinion leſt they ſhould give advantage to *Infidels* by attributing that to a *miracle*, which might be done without, ſeem to be more wary than wiſe in it. For beſides that it is certain that *miracles* may be in thoſe things which might be effected otherwiſe by natural *cauſes*, when they are produced without the *help* of thoſe *cauſes*, and in a ſpace of time impoſſible to *nature*; and that it hath not been as yet proved how ſuch diverſity of *tongues* as is in the world would have been effected without ſuch a *miracle*; it muſt be granted by them that there was a *miracle* in it; and what greater difficulty there ſhould be in the *variety* of *languages*, than in the ſignification of the ſame *words*, I underſtand not. But I ſee no neceſſity of aſſerting that every one of the *families* had a diſtinct *language*, and the common opinion of 70. or 72. as the Gr *families* and as many *languages*, is now taken for a groundleſs *fancy* by learned men: as is eaſily proved from the dividing *Father* and *Children*, whoſe families could not certainly be without them: and ſome ſuppoſed to be unborn then, as *Joktan's* 13 *Children*; eſpecially if we ſay as many do, that the *Confuſion* was at the birth of *Phaleg*, and *Joktan* was his younger brother, as the *Jews* generally do. To the laſt objection it may be replyed, that the agreement of *languages* in ſome *radical* words doth not inferr the *derivation* of the one from the other, as is plain in the *Perſian* and *German*, in which learned men have obſerved ſo many words alike. And ſo by *Busbequius* of the inhabitants about *Tauricke Cherſoneſe*; and ſo in moſt of our modern *tongues* there may be ſome words alike without any ſuch *dependence* or *derivation*. Again, though it be granted that the *languages* of them who were at *Babel* were confounded, yet it is not neceſſary we ſhould ſay that all *Noah's* poſterity were there. It is thought by ſome that they were chiefly *Cham* and his *company*; if ſo then *Sem* and his *poſterity* might retain the *language* they had before, only with ſome *variations*.

Bot. Geor l. 1. c. 15.
Buxt. diatr. ſect. 54.
Buxt. diat ſect. 68.
Lipſcent. 3. ep. 44.
Busbeq. ep. 24.
Mayer. Philol ſacr. p. 2. c. 6.

But

But this is very uncertain, unless we take it for *Heber* and *Peleg*, from whose vicinity other bordering *Nations* might make use of many of their primitive *words*: and for the *Greeks*, it will be granted that many of their *words*, especially the old *Beotick*, had affinity with the *Hebrew*; but it was from the *Pelasgi* at first and *Cadmus* the *Phœnician* afterwards: the old *Canaanitish* language, being if not the pure *Hebrew*, yet a dialect of that *tongue*, as is proved by many learned men. But however these things be, it is not necessary to say that all *Mother tongues* so called, were then existent at that *confusion*: but the present *curse* did divide their *languages* who were there, and that all division of *languages* since, is to be looked upon as the effect of that *curse*.

It being thus manifested what a strange confusion of *languages* was caused in the world, we may thereby easily understand how the ancient *tradition* came to be *corrupted* and *altered* in the world.

Another reason of the *alteration* of the ancient *tradition*, was, the *fabulousness* of the *Poets*: for these made it their design to *disguise* all their ancient *stories* under *Fables*, in which they were so lost, that they could never recover them afterwards. For the elder *Poets* of *Greece* being men of greater *learning* than generally the people were of, and being conversant in *Ægypt* and other *parts*, did bring in new *reports* of the *ancient times* which they received from the *Nations* they went to; and by mixing their own *traditions* and *others* together, and by suiting what was remaining of the *ancient tradition* to these, they must needs make a strange *confusion* of things together, and leave them much more *obscure* and *fabulous* than they found them. And herein all their *cunning* and *subtilty* lay in putting a *new face* on whatever they borrowed from other Nations, and making them appear among themselves in a *Greek habit*, that the former owners of those *traditions* could scarce challenge them as theirs under so strange a *Metamorphosis*. For those things which were most plain and historical in the Fountains whence they derived them, they did so περιπλῦν as *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks, (or as *Origen*, περιπλάττειν ἀνάγλυφον) wrapt them up under so great *Mythology* that the *Original Truths* can hardly be discerned, because of that multitude of *prodigious fables*, *Sect.* 5. 4. *Stromat.* 6. c. *Cels.* l. 4.

with which they have inlaid them. But as great as their *artifice* was in the doing this, we may yet discern apparently many of those particular *courses* which were taken by them to *disguise* and alter the *primitive tradition*.

1. *Attributing* what was done by the great *Ancestors* of mankind to some persons of their own Nations. Thus the *Thessalians* make *Deucalion* to be the person who escaped the *flood*, and from whom the world was peopled after it. And whoever compares the *relation* of the *flood* of *Deucalion* in *Apollodorus* with that in the *Scripture*, might easily render *Apollodorus* his *Greek* in the *language* of the *Scriptures*, only changing *Greece* into the whole *earth*, and *Deucalion* into *Noah*, *Parnassus* into *Ararat*, and *Jupiter* into *Jehovah*. On the same account the *Athenians* attribute the *flood* to *Ogyges*, not that the flood of *Ogyges* and *Deucalion* were *particular* and *distinct deluges*, which many have taken a great deal of needless pains to place in their several *ages*: But as *Deucalion* was of the eldest memory in *Thessaly*, so was *Ogyges* at *Athens*, and so the *flood* as being a matter of remotest *Antiquity*, was on the same account in both places attributed to both these. Because as mankind was supposed to begin again after the *flood*, so they had among them no memory extant of any elder than these two, from whom on that account they supposed mankind derived. And on the same reason it may be supposed that the *Assyrians* attribute the *flood* to *Xisuthrus*, whom they supposed to be a *King* of *Assyria*; but the circumstances of the story as delivered by *Alexander Polyhistor*, and *Abydenus*, are such as make it clear to be only a remainder of the *universal flood* which happened in the time of *Noah*. So the *Thessalians* make *Prometheus* to be the *Protoclast*; the *Peleponnesians Phoroneus*, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us, whom *Phoronides* the *Poet* calls πατέρα τῶν ἀνθρώπων, *The Father of mankind*. This may be now the first way of corrupting the ancient *tradition*, by supposing all that was conveyed by it to have been acted among themselves. which may be imputed partly to their ignorance of the *state* of their ancient *times*, and partly to their *pride*, lest they should seem to come behind others in matters of *Antiquity*.

Apollod. biblioth. l. 1. p. 19.

Apud Cyril. c. Julian. lib. 1.

Strom. l. 1.

2. Another

2. Another fountain of *Heathen Mythology*, was the taking the *Idiom* of the *Oriental languages* in a proper sence. For whether we suppose the ancient *traditions* were conveyed to them in the ancient *Hebrew* by the *Pelasgi*, or were delivered to them by the *Phœnicians*, or were fetched out of the *Scriptures* themselves (as some suppose, though improbably of *Homer* and some ancient *Poets*) yet all these several ways agreeing in this, that the *traditions* were *Oriental*, we thereby understand how much of their *Mythology* came by taking the *Hebrew* in a proper and literal sence without attending to the *Idiom* of the tongue. From hence *Bochartus* hath ingeniously fetched many *Heathen Fables*. Thus when *Noah* is said to be איש האדמה *Gen.* 9. 20. which in the *Idiom* of the *Hebrew* only signifies a *husbandman*, they took it in a proper sence for ὁ ἀνὴρ τῆς γῆς, and thence *Saturn* who was the same with *Noah* (as will appear afterwards) is made by *Mythologists* the husband of *Rhea* which was the same with the *Earth*. So the *Gyants* making war against *Heaven*, was only a *Poetical adumbration* of the design at the building of *Babel*, whose *top* in the Scripture is said to reach בשמים which in the *Hebrew* signifies only a *great height*; but to *aggrandize* the *Story*, was taken in the literal *interpretation*, that they attempted *Heaven*. So when they are said to fight against the *Gods*, *Bochartus* thinks it might be taken from that phrase of *Nimrod*, that he was a *mighty hunter* לפני יהוה *before the Lord* we render it, but it sometimes signifies *against the Lord*. So what *Abydenus* saith of the *Gyants*, that they were ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἀνάγοντες, *those that came out of the earth*, is supposed to be taken from that *phrase*, Gen. 10. 11. מן הארץ יצא, *e terra ipsa exiit*. But far more likely and probable is that which learned men are generally agreed in concerning *Bacchus* his being born of *Jupiter's thigh*, which is only an expression of that *Hebraism* יצאי ירכו wherein *coming out of the thigh* is a phrase for ordinary *procreation*. Gen. 11. 4. *Apud Euseb. Prap. Evang. l.* 9. Gen. 46. 6.

3. A third way observable, is, the alteration of the *names* in the ancient *tradition*, and putting names of like *importance* to them in their own language. Thus *Jupiter* who was the same with *Cham*, was called Ζεὺς ἐπὶ τῷ ζέειν, as חם, from חמם *fervere, incalescere*. Ἄμμων ὁ Αἰγύπτιοι καλοῦσι Διὰ, 3.

Δία, saith *Herodotus*; him whom the *Greeks* call Ζεὺς, the *Ægyptians* call *Cham*. So *Japheth*, whose memory was preserved under *Neptune*, to whose portion the *Islands* in the *Sea* fell, was called by the *Greeks* Ποσειδῶν, which comes (saith *Bochartus*) from the *Punick* פשיטן which signifies *large* and *broad*, which is the very importance of the *Hebrew* ורח thence in allusion to the name, it is said, *Gen.* 9. 27. יפת, אלהים ליפת *God shall enlarge Japhet*. Thence the *Epithetes* of *Neptune* are ἐυρύσερϑ, ἐυρύοπ, ἐυρυκρείων, all equally alluding to the name *Japhet*. So Ἀπόλλων in the *Greek* is of the same importance with the *Heb.* שד, *Dæmon*, from שדד *to destroy*. Thence we read, *Deut.* 32. 17. *they sacrificed* לשדים, *to Devils*. *Canaan* in the *Hebrew* signifies a Merchant; thence *Mercury*, under whom the memory of *Canaan* the son of *Cham* was preserved is derived, by many from מכר *to sell*. *Ceres* which was the Inventress of *Agriculture*, from נרש which imports *bread-corn*. These and many others are produced by *Vossius*, *Heinsius*, *Bochartus* and other learned men, which I insist not on, because my design is only *digitos ad fontes intendere*, and to make these handsome and probable conjectures, argumentative to our purpose, and to bind up those loose and scattering *observations* into some order and method, in which they have not yet appeared, nor been improved to that end which I make *use* of them for.

Phaleg l. 1. *cap.* 1.

4 When the *Oriental phrases* were *ambiguous* and *equivocal*, they omitted that sence which was plain and obvious, and took that which was more strange and fabulous. From hence the learned *Bochartus* hath fetched the *Fable* of the *golden Fleece*, which was nothing else but the *robbing* the *Treasury* of the *King* of *Colchis*; but it was disguised under the name of the *golden Fleece*, because the *Syriack word* גוא signifies both a *Fleece* and a *Treasury*. So the *Bulls* and *Dragons* which kept it, were nothing but the *walls* and *brass gates*; for שור, signifies both a *Bull* and a *Wall*, and נחש *Brass*, and a *Dragon*. And so the Fable of the *Brass-Bull* in the mountain *Atabyrius* which foretold calamities, arose from the *æquivocation* of the *Phœnician* or *Hebrew* words אלוף מנחש which signifie either *Doctor Augur*, or *bos ex ære*, a *foreteller* of *events* or a *brazen Bull*. From the like Ambiguity of the word אלסיא arose the *Fable* of *Jupiter* stealing *Europa* in the

the form of a *Bull*, because the word either signifies a *Ship* in which he conveyed her way, or a *Bull*; or it may be the Ship had ἐμβόλιον *bovis*, as the ship St. *Paul* sailed in had *Castor* and *Pollux*, it being usual to call their *Ships* by the names of the signs they carried. From the like *æquivocation* in the *Phœnician* language doth *Boehartus* fetch many other *Heathen Fables*, in his excellent piece *de Phœnicum Coloniis*, as particularly that of *Arethusa* coming from *Alpheus*, which was from אלפי a *Ship*, because it was not far from an *Excellent Haven*. And so he makes the *Chimæra* to be more than a mere *ens rationis*; for he takes the *Chimæra* which *Bellerophon* conquered, to be only the *people* of *Solymi* under the three Generals, *Aryus*, *Trosibis*, and *Arsalus*; ארי that signifies a *Lion*; *Trosibis* was ראש הויא *the head of a Serpent*: *Arsalus* was אור ויל a *young kid*, and so the *Chimæra* consisted of *the form of a Lyon, a Goat, and a Serpent*. Thus we see how easie a matter it was to advance the *Heathen Mythology* from the *equivocation* of the *Oriental Languages*, in which their *Traditions* were conveyed to them.

Canaan. l. 1. *cap.* 28.

Canaan. l. 1. *c.* 6.

But yet a more prolifick *principle* of *Mythology* was by attributing the *actions* of several *persons* to *one* who was the *first* or the *chief* of them. Thus it was in the stories of *Jupiter*, *Neptune*, *Mars*, *Mercury*, *Minerva*, *Juno*, *Bacchus* and *Hercules*, which were a collection of the *actions* done by a multitude of persons, which were all attributed to one person. So *Vossius* tells us before the time of the *Trojan Wars*, most of their *Kings*, who were renowned and powerful, were called *Joves*. Now when the *actions* of all these are attributed to one *Jupiter* of *Crete*, they must needs swell his story up with abundance of *Fables*. *Vossius* hath taken a great deal of pains to digest in an historical manner the stories of the several *Jupiters*, whereof he reckons two *Argives*, a third the Father of *Hercules*, a fourth a *King* of *Phrygia*, and two more of *Crete*: to one of which, without any distinction, the actions of all the rest were ascribed, and who was worshipped under the name of *Jupiter*. And so besides the ancient *Neptune*, who was the same with *Japhet*, they sometimes understood any *Insular Prince*, or one that had great power at *Sea*; but besides these, there were two famous *Neptunes* among the

Sect. 6. 5.

De Idol. l. 1.

the *Greeks*, the one of *Athens*, the other the *builder* of the *walls* of *Troy*: now the ſtories of all theſe being mixed together, muſt needs make a ſtrange *confuſion*. So for *Mars*, beſides that ancient one they had by the *Oriental tradition*, they had a *Spartan*, *Thracian*, and *Arcadian Mars*. What abundance of *Mercuries* are we told of by *Tully*? and of no leſs than five *Minerva's*? Every angry, ſcornful, jealous *Queen* would fill up the *Fables* of *Juno*, who was equally claimed by the *Argives* and *Samians*. What conteſts were there between the *Greeks* and *Ægyptians* concerning the Country of *Bacchus*, or *Liber Pater*, whoſe ſtory was made up of many patches of the *Oriental ſtory*, as will appear afterwards. The ſame may be ſaid of *Hercules*. Now what a ſtrange way was this to increaſe the number of *Fables*? when they had *one* whoſe memory was anciently preſerved among them, they attributed the *actions* of all ſuch to him, who came near him in that which his memory was moſt remarkable for: And in thoſe things which they did retain of the *Eaſtern tradition*, it was an uſual thing to confound perſons, places and actions together. So the ſtory of *Enoch* and *Methuſelah* is joyned together by *Stephanus de Urbibus*, under the name of Ἀννακῶ, who is there ſaid to live above 300 years (which agrees with *Enoch* as the name doth) and that at his death the world ſhould be deſtroyed by a *Flood*; which agrees with *Methuſelah*. So *Abraham* by *Orpheus* is called μονογενὴς, which belongs to *Iſaac* his Son; ſo the actions of *Nimrod*, *Ninus* and *Cham*, are confounded together in their *Mythology*. By theſe ſeveral ways now we underſtand how the *original tradition* was by degrees corrupted and altered in the *Heathen Mythology*.

Cicero l. 3. de Natur. D.

Steph. V. Ἀννακῶ.

Sect. 7. I come now to the *footſteps* of *Scripture-hiſtory* which notwithſtanding theſe *corruptions*, may be diſcerned in the *Heathen Mythology*, which I ſhall methodically enquire after according to the *ſeries* of *Scripture-hiſtory*. That the *names* given to *God* in Scripture were preſerved among the *Phœnicians*, appears ſufficiently by the remainders of the *Phœnician Theology*, tranſlated by *Philo Byblius* out of *Sanchoniathon*; wherein we read of the God Ἰάω, which hath the ſame letters with יהוה, beſides which there we meet with Ἑλεῶν, the ſame with עליון *the moſt High*, and Ἰαῶ, which is אל *the ſtrong God*; *Beelſaman*,

V. Scaliger. not. in fr. Græc.
Selden. de Diis Syris.
Bochart. Cana. l. 2. c. 2.

Beelsamen, which is, בעל שמין *the God of Heaven*, and Ελωειμ, the very name of *God* used in the beginning of *Genesis* so often. Besides, in those *fragments* we have express mention of the *Chaos*, and the *evening* following it, or *the darkness on the face of the Deep*; the *Creation* of *Angels* under the ζωφασημὶν, צובא שמים those *beings* which contemplate the *Heavens*: and the *Creation* of *mankind* ἐκ τῆ κόλπε ἀνέμε, i. e. קול פי יה saith *Bochartus*, *the voice of the mouth of God*, which is by *God's word* and *inspiration*, when it is expressed that God said, *Let us make man*, and that he *breathed into him the breath of life*. After we read of γηΐνΘ and αὐτόχθον, which properly agree to *Adam*, who was made out of the *Earth*. *Vossius* conceives that the memory of *Adam* was preserved among the old *Germans*, of whom *Tacitus* speaks, *Celebrant antiquis carminibus Tuistonem Deum terra editum, & filium Mannum, originem gentis, conditoresque*. Either by *Tuisto Adam* is understood, who was formed of the Earth, and by *Mannus*, *Noah*: or by *Tuisto God* may be understood, and by *Mannus*, *Adam*; to which conjecture may be added further that the same Author reports that some of the *Germans* sacrificed to *Isis*, which *Vossius* likewise conceives to be a remainder of the *Hebrew Ischa*. And so among the *Ægyptians* it is with like probability conceived that *Adam* and *Ischa* were preserved under *Osiris* and *Isis*, as they were historically taken. In *Cilicia*, the City *Adana* is thought to have some remainder of the name of *Adam*; for the *Greeks* had no termination in *M*, therefore for *Adam* they pronounced it *Adan*, and that from Ἀδανὸς, and so the City *Adana*: Now that Ἀδανὸς, by *Stephanus de Urbibus*, is said to be the *Son of Heaven and Earth*. Ἔστ ἢ ὁ Ἀδανὸς γῆς ἢ ἡμέρᾳ παῖς. This *Adanus*, he tells us, was otherwise called ΚρόνΘ or *Saturn*, under whom the *Greeks* preserved the memory of *Adam*; for *Diodorus*, *Thallus*, *Cassius*, *Severus*, and *Cornelius Nepos*, do all (as *Tertullian* saith) confess *Saturn* to have been a man; and according to their *Fables*, he must have been the *first* of *men*. *Saturn* was the *Son* of *Heaven and Earth*, and so was *Adam*: he taught men husbandry; and was not *Adam* the first that tilled the ground? Besides, that power which *Saturn* had, and was deposed from, doth fitly set out the *Dominion* man had in the *Golden Age* of

De Idol. l. 1. cap. 38.

Tacit. de moris German.

Stephanus V. Ἀδανα.

Apolog. c. 10.

of *Innocency* which he loſt by his own folly. And *Adam*'s hiding himſelf from the preſence of the *Lord*, gave occaſion to the name of *Saturn*, from *Satar* to hide. We find ſomething of *Cain* preſerved in the *Phœnician antiquities*, under the name of Ἀγρόυης or Ἀγρότης, the firſt Conntryman or Husbandman, who with his brother Ἀγρὸς built houſes, and the firſt foundation of a City is attributed to *Cain*: And on that account *Voſſius* conjectures that the memory of *Cain*'s wife was preſerved under *Veſta*, both becauſe ſhe was the daughter of *Saturn*, i. e. of *Adam*, and that ſhe is ſaid τῶν οἰκῶν κατασκευὴν εὑρεῖν, *to find out firſt the way of building houſes*. That *Tubal-Cain* gave firſt occaſion to the name and worſhip of *Vulcan*, hath been very probably conceived, both from the very great affinity of the names, and that *Tubal-Cain* is expreſly mentioned *to be an Inſtructer of every Artificer in braſs and iron*; and as near relation as *Apollo* had to *Vulcan*, *Jubal* had to *Tubal-Cain*, who was the *Inventer of Muſick, or the Father of all ſuch as handle the Harp and Organ*; which the *Greeks* attribute to *Apollo*. And if that be true which *Genebrard* and others aſcribe to *Naamah*, the ſiſter of *Jubal* and *Tubal-Cain*, *viz.* that ſhe was the inventer of Spinning and Weaving, then may ſhe come in for *Minerva*. Thus we ſee there were ſome, though but obſcure foot-ſteps preſerved, even of that part of *Scripture-hiſtory* which preceeded the Flood.

Poſſ. de Idol. l. 1. c. 17.

Gen. 4. 22.

4. 21.

Sect. 8. The memory of the Deluge it ſelf we have already found to be preſerved in the *Heathen Mythology*; we come therefore to *Noah* and his poſterity. Many parcels of *Noah*'s memory were preſerved in the ſcattered fragments of many Fables, under, *Saturn*, *Janus*, *Prometheus*, and *Bacchus*. *Bochartus* inſiſts on no fewer than 14 *Parallels* between *Noah* and the *Heathen Saturn*, which he ſaith are ſo plain, that there is no doubt but under *Saturn*, *Noah* was underſtood in the *Heathen Mythology*. *Saturn* was ſaid to be the common Parent of *Mankind*, ſo was *Noah*; *Saturn* was a juſt King, *Noah* not only *righteous* himſelf, but a Preacher of righteouſneſs; The golden *Age* of *Saturn* was between *Noah* and the diſperſion of *Nations*. In *Noah*'s time all mankind had but one *Language*, which the *Heathens* extend under *Saturn*, both to men and beaſts: The plantation of *Vines* attributed to *Saturn* by the Heathens, as to *Noah* by the *Scriptures*: The Law of *Saturn* mentioned

Phaleg. l. 1. c. 1.

mentioned by the *Poets*, that none should see the nakedness of the *Gods* without *punishment*, seems to respect the *fact* and *curse* of *Cham*, in reference to *Noah*. *Saturn* and *Rhea*, and those with them are said to be born of *Thetis*, or the *Ocean*, which plainly alludes to *Noah* and his companies escaping the *Flood*; thence a *Ship* was the *symbol* of *Saturn*; and that *Saturn* devoured all his *children*, seems to be nothing else but the *destruction* of the *old world* by *Noah's flood*. And not only under *Saturn*, but under *Prometheus* too, was *Noah's* memory preserved. *Diodorus* speaks of the great *flood* under *Prometheus*; *Biblioth. l. 1.* and *Prometheus* implies one that hath *forecast* and *wisdom*, such as *Noah* had, whereby he foretold the *floud*, and was saved in it, when others were *Epimetheus's*, that had not wit to prevent their own destruction.

And no wonder if *Prometheus* were *Noah*, that the forming *mankind* was attributed to him, when the world was peopled from him. *Herodotus* his saying that *Asia* was *Prometheus* his *wife*, might relate to the Countrey *Noah* lived in, and our propagation from thence. Another part of *Noah's* memory was preserved under *Janus*; the name of *Janus* is most probably derived from יין, because of *Noah's* planting a *Vine*, and *Janus* was called *Consivius*, saith *Macrobius*, *à conserendo*, *hoc est*, *à propagine generis humani*, *quæ Jano autore conseritur*; now to whom can this be so properly applied as to *Noah* from whom mankind was propagated? and *Janus* his being *bifrons* or looking πρόσω καὶ ὀπίσω, *forward and backward*, is not so fit an emblem of any thing as of *Noah's* seeing those two ages before and after the flood. And it is further observable which *Plutarch* speaks of in his *Roman questions*, that the ancient *coins* had on one side the image of *Janus* with his two *faces*, on the other πλοίου πρύμναν ἢ πρῷραν ἐγκεχαραγμένην, *the fore or hinder part of the ship*, by which the *memory* of the *Ark* of *Noah* seems to have been preserved. Thus we see what *Analogy* there is in the story of *Janus* with that of *Noah*: not that I give credit to those *fooleries* which tell us of *Noah's* coming from *Palæstine* with his son *Japhet* into *Italy* and planting *Colonies* there, for which we are beholding to the spurious *Ethruscan Antiquities*; but all that I assert is, that the story of *Noah* might be preserved in the eldest *Colonies*, though disguised under other *names*, as here in the case of *Janus*. *V. Mayer. Phil. sacr. p. 2. c. 5.*

And on the ſame account that the name of *Janus* is attributed to *Noah*, ſome likewiſe believe him to have been the moſt ancient *Bacchus*, who was according to *Diodorus* πρῶτος φυτεύσας ἄμπελον, *the firſt planter of Vines and inſtructer of men in making Wines*; and beſides, *Bacchus* his being *twice born* ſeems only an *adumbration* of *Noah*'s preſervation after the flood, which might be accounted a ſecond *nativity* when the reſt of the world was deſtroyed; and withall *Philoſtratus* in the life of *Apollonius* relates that the ancient *Indian Bacchus* came thither out of *Aſſyria*, which yet more fully agrees with *Noah*. So that from theſe ſcattered members of *Hippolytus* and theſe broken *fragments* of *traditions*, we may gather almoſt an entire hiſtory of all the *paſſages* concerning *Noah*.

Biblioth.

Philoſtr. c. 4.

Sect. 9. As the ſtory of *Saturn* and *Noah* do much agree, ſo the three ſons of *Noah* and thoſe of *Saturn*, *Jupiter*, *Neptune*, and *Pluto* have their peculiar reſemblances to each other. Of which *Voſſius* and *Bochartus* have largely ſpoken, and we have touched on already. Beſides which this latter Author hath carried the parallel lower, and finds *Canaan* the ſon of *Cham*, the ſame with *Mercury* the ſon of *Jupiter*; as it was the curſe of *Canaan* to be a *ſervant* of *ſervants*, ſo *Mercury* is always deſcribed under ſervile employments; his *wings* ſeem to be the ſhips of the *Phœnicians* who were derived from *Canaan*, and his being the *God* of trade, noting the great *Merchandize* of the *Phœnicians*, and *Mercury*'s *thievery* noting the *Pyracies*, or at leaſt the *ſubtilty* and craft of the *Phœnicians*; he was the *Father* of *eloquence* and *Aſtronomy*, as *letters* and *Aſtronomy* came from the *Phœnicians* into *Greece*. The ſame Author parallels *Nimrod* and *Bacchus*, and *Magog* and *Prometheus* together. The name of *Bacchus* is but a light variation of בר כוש, *Bar-chus*, as *Nimrod* was the ſon of *Chus*, and *Bacchus* is called *Nebrodes* by the *Greeks*, which is the very name of *Nimrod* among them, and *Bacchus* is called Ζωγενὺς, which excellently interprets *Nimrod*'s being a *mighty hunter*. *Bacchus* his expeditions into *India* were the *attempts* of *Nimrod* and the *Aſſyrian Emperors*. On which account *Voſſius* makes *Nimrod* or *Belus* the moſt ancient *Mars*; for *Heſtiæus Mileſius* ſpeaks of *Enyalius* which is *Mars*, his being in *Sennaar* of *Babylonia*. That the memory of *Magog* was preſerved under *Prometheus*, theſe things make it probable, that *Magog* was

Voſſ. de Idol. l. 1. c. 18.

Boch. Phaleg. l. 1. c. 1. cap. 2.

De Idol. l. 1. c. 16.

was the ſon of *Japhet*, as *Prometheus* of *Iapetus*, and that the poſterity of *Magog* was placed about *Caucaſus*, where *Prometheus* is feigned to lie: and the *eating* of *Prometheus* his heart, is only an interpretation of מגג which applied to the *heart* ſignifies to *waſte away* and *be conſumed*. Thus far *Bochartus*.

The *Phœnician antiquities* ſeem to have preſerved the memory of *Abraham*'s *ſacrificing* his ſon *Iſaac*, by that place which *Euſebius* produceth out of *Porphyrie*'s book concerning the *Jews*; where he relates, *how* Saturn *whom the* Phœnicians *call* Iſrael, *when he reigned in thoſe parts, and had an only ſon called* Jeoud, *of a nymph called* Anobret, *being under ſome great calamity, did ſacrifice that ſon of his being cloathed with a royal habit*. Here we have a royal perſon called *Iſrael*; and that *Abraham* ſhould be accounted a *King* in thoſe elder times, is nothing ſtrange, conſidering his wealth, and what petty *royalties* there were in thoſe times. But *Grotius*, and from him *Voſſius*, do not think that *Abraham* was here called *Iſrael*, but that the tranſcriber of *Euſebius* meeting with ΙΛ ſuppoſed it to be a contraction of ΙΣΡΑΗΛ, and ſo writ it at length, it muſt be acknowledged that ΙΛ is uſed in the *Phœnician Theology* for *Saturn*, but yet the circumſtances of the ſtory make the ordinary reading not *improbable*; neither is it ſtrange, that *Abraham* ſhould be called by the name of the People which he was the Progenitor of. That *Iſaac* ſhould be meant by his only *ſon* called *Jeoud* is moſt likely; for when *God* bids *Abraham* go ſacrifice him, he ſaith, *Take thy ſon* יחיד, *thy onely ſon*; *Jehid* is the ſame with the *Phœnician Jeoud*. That *Sara* is meant by *Anobret*, the original of the name implies, which is as *Bochartus* derives it חן עוברת, *Annobereſt*, that is, *ex gratia concipiens*, which the *Apoſtle* explains. *Through faith* Sara *her ſelf received ſtrength to conceive ſeed*. Now all the difference is, that which was only deſigned and intended by *Abraham*, was believed by the *Phœnicians* as really done, that it might be as a *precedent* to them for their ἀνθρωποθυσίαι, *ſacrificing* of men, a thing ſo much in uſe among the *Phœnicians*, and all the *Colonies* derived from them, as many learned men have at large ſhewed. But beſides this, there are particular teſtimonies concerning *Abraham*, his age, wiſdom and knowledge, his coming out of *Chaldæa*, and the *propagation* of knowledge from him among the *Chaldæans*, *Phœnicians*, and

V. Scaliger not. ad fr. Gr.

Grot. in Deut. c. 18. v. 10. Voſſ. de Idol. l. 1. c. 18.

Gen. 22, 1.

De Phœnic. col. l. 2. c. 2.

Heb. 11. 11.

Ægyptians, are extant out of *Berosus*, *Eupolemus*, and others in *Josephus* and *Eusebius*, and from thence transcribed by many learned men, which on that account I forbear transcribing, as being common and obvious.

Joseph. Antiq. l. 1. c. 7. *Euseb. Præp. Evang. l. 9. c. 16.*

Sect 10. Some have not improbably conjectured, that the memory of *Jacob*'s long peregrination, and service with his *Uncle Laban*, was preserved under the story of *Apollo* his banishment and being a *Shepherd* under *Admetus*. For *Callimachus* reports that *Love* was the cause of *Apollo*'s travails, as it was of *Jacob*'s, and withall mentions a strange increase of *Cattel* under *Apollo*'s care, answerable to what the *Scripture* reports concerning *Jacob*. But it is more certain, that the memory of *Jacob*'s setting up the *stone* he had rested on for a *pillar*, and pouring *oyl* upon it, and calling the place *Bethel*, was preserved under the *anointed stones* which the *Phœnicians* from *Bethel* called Βαιτύλια, as hath been frequently observed by learned men, from whence came the custom of *anointing stones* among the *Heathens*, of which so very many have largely discoursed. Thence the Proverb of a superstitious man, πίνακα λίθον λιπαρὸν ποιοῦντι, which *Arnobius* calls *lubricatum lapidem & ex olivi unguine sordidatum*. It seems the anointing the stones with oyl, was then the symbol of the consecration of them. The name Βαίτυλος for such a stone occurrs in *Hesychius*, the *Greek Etymologist*, *Damascius* in *Photius*, and others. That the memory of *Joseph* in *Ægypt* was preserved under the *Ægyptian Apis*, hath been shewed with a great deal of probability by the learned *Vossius*, in his often cited piece of *Idolatry*, from the testimonies of *Julius Maternus*, *Rufinus*, and *Suidas*; and from these three arguments. 1. The greatness of the benefit which the *Ægyptians* received by *Joseph*; which was of that nature that it could not easily be forgot, and that no *symbol* was so proper to set it out as the *Ægyptian Apis*; because the *famine* was portended by lean Kine, and the *plenty* by fat; and *Minucius* at *Rome*, for relieving the People in a time of *famine*, had a statue of a *golden Bull* erected to his memory. 2. The *Ægyptians* were not backward to testifie their respect to *Joseph*, as appears by *Pharaoh*'s rewarding him; now it was the *custom* of the *Ægyptians* to preserve the *memories* of their great Benefactors by some *symbols* to *posterity*; which were at first intended only for a

Callimach. Hymn. in Apollo.

Gen. 28. 18.

Scal. not. in fr. Gr. Bochart. Can. l. 2. c. 2. Seld. de Diis Syris. V. Heinf. in Clem. Alex. Str. 7. Casaubon. ad Theoph. p. 295. Herald. ad Arnob. l. 1. Colvium ad Apul. Florid. Ouzel. & Elmenhorst. ad Minuc. de Idolola. l. 1. c. 29.

civil

civil use, although they were after abused to *Superstition* and *Idolatry*. 3. From the names of *Apis* and *Serapis*. *Apis* he conceives to be the sacred name of *Joseph* among the *Ægyptians*, and is as much as אב, *Father*; so *Joseph* himself saith, Gen. 45. 8. he was as a *Father* to *Pharaoh*. And *Serapis*, as *Rufinus* and *Suidas* both tell us, had a *bushel* upon his *head*, and *Serapis* is probably derived from שור, *Sor*, which signifies a *Bull*, and *Apis*. So that by this means the story of *Joseph* is attested by the *Ægyptians superstitions*, of which they can give no account so likely as this is.

Many things concerning *Moses* are preserved in the story of *Bacchus*, not that from thence we are to concluded that *Moses* was the *Bacchus* of the *Greeks*, as *Vossius* thinks, but they took several parts of the *Eastern traditions* concerning him, which they might have from the *Phœnicians* who came with *Cadmus* into *Greece*, while the memory of *Moses* was yet fresh among the *Canaanites*. In the story of *Bacchus*, as *Vossius* ob- *De Idol. l. 1.* serves, it is expresly said, that he was born in *Ægypt*, and that *c. 30.* soon after his birth he was put in an *Ark*, and exposed to the River, which *tradition* was preserved among the *Brasiatæ* of *Laconica*: and *Bacchus* in *Orpheus* is called Μίσης, and by *Plutarch de Iside & Osiride*, *Palæstinus*: and he is called βιμάτης which agrees to *Moses*, who, besides his own Mother, was adopted by *Pharaoh's daughter*: *Bacchus* was likewise commended for his *beauty* as *Moses* was, and was said to be educated in a Mount of *Arabia* called *Nysa*, which agrees with *Moses* his residence in *Arabia* forty years; so *Plutarch* mentions φυγὰς Διονύσου the *banishments* of *Bacchus*, and *Nonnus* menti- *Dion. l. 20.* ons *Bacchus* his *flight* into the *Red-sea*: who likewise mentions his *battles* in *Arabia* and with the neighbouring *Princes* there. *Diodorus* saith, that *Bacchus* his Army had not only men but *women* in it; which is most true of the *company* which *Bibl. l. 4.* *Moses* led. *Orpheus* calls *Bacchus* δισωτῆρα, and attributes to him πλάκας δισῶν, whereby we understand *Moses* his being a *Legislator*, and that he delivered the *Law* in *two Tables*. *Moses* his fetching *water* out of a *rock* with his rod, is preserved in the *Orgia* of *Bacchus*, in which *Euripides* relates that *Agave* and the rest of the *Bacchæ* celebrating the *Orgia*, one of them touched a *rock*, and the *water* came out: and in the same *Orgia Euripides* reports how they were wont to

Sect. 11.

crown

crown their heads with *Serpents*, probably in memory of the cure of the fiery *Serpents* in the Wilderneſs. A *dog* is made the companion of *Bacchus*, which is the ſignification of *Caleb*, who ſo faithfully adhered to *Moſes*. To theſe and ſome other circumſtances inſiſted on by *Voſſius*, *Bochartus* adds two more very conſiderable ones; which are, that *Nonnus* reports of *Bacchus* that he touched the two *rivers Orontes* and *Hydaſpes* with his *thyrſus*, or *rod*, and that the *rivers* dried, and he paſſed through them: and that his *Ivy-ſtaff* being thrown upon the *ground*, *crept up* and down like a *Serpent*, and that the *Indians* were in *darkneſs* while the *Bacchæ* enjoyed *light*; which circumſtances conſidered will make every one that hath judgment ſay as *Bochartus* doth; *ex mirabili illo conſenſu vel cæcis apparebit priſcos fabularum architectos è ſcriptoribus ſacris multa eſſe mutuatos.* From this wonderfull agreement of *Heathen Mythology* with the *Scriptures*, it cannot but appear that one is a corruption of the other. That the memory of *Joſhua* and *Sampſon* was preſerved under *Hercules Tyrius*, is made likewiſe very probable from ſeveral circumſtances of the ſtories. Others have deduced the many *rites* of *Heathen worſhip* from thoſe uſed in the *Tabernacle* among the *Jews*. Several others might be inſiſted on, as the *Parallel* between *Og* and *Typho*, and between the old *Silenus* and *Balaam*, both noted for their skill in divination, both taken by the *water*, Num. 22. 5. both noted for *riding* on an *Aſs*: ὄνῳ ὄντι τὰ πολλὰ ὀχέμενον, ſaith *Lucian* of the old *Silenus*; and that which makes it yet more probable, is that of *Pauſanias*, ἐν δὲ τῇ Ἐβραίων χώρᾳ Σιλλωῦ μνῆμα, which ſome *learned* men have been much puzled to find out the truth of; and this conjecture which I here propound, may paſs at leaſt for a probable account of it; but I ſhall no longer inſiſt on theſe things, having, I ſuppoſe, done what is ſufficient to our purpoſe, which is, to make it appear what *footſteps* there are of the *truth* of *Scripture-hiſtory* amidſt all the corruptions of *Heathen Mythology*.

Canaan. l. 1. c. 18.

De Idol. l. 1. c. 26. p. 188. p. 169.

De Deor. Con. Eliacôn. 2. p. 203.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Excellency of the Scriptures.

Concerning matters of pure divine revelation in Scripture: the terms of Salvation only contained therein. The ground of the diseteem of the Scripture is tacite unbelief. The Excellency of the Scriptures manifested as to the matters which God hath revealed therein. The Excellency of the discoveries of God's nature which are in Scripture. Of the goodneß and love of God in Christ. The suitableneß of those discoveries of God to our natural notions of a Deity. The neceſſity of God's making known himself to us in order to the regulating our conceptions of him. The Scriptures give the fulleſt account of the ſtate of men's ſouls, and the corruptions which are in them. The only way of pleaſing God diſcovered in Scriptures. The Scriptures contain matters of greateſt myſteriouſneß, and moſt univerſal ſatisfaction to men's minds. The Excellency of the manner wherein things are revealed in Scriptures, in regard of clearneß, authority, purity, uniformity, and perſuaſiveneß. The Excellency of the Scriptures as a rule of life. The nature of the duties of Religion and the reaſonableneß of them. The greatneß of the encouragements to Religion contained in the Scriptures. The great Excellency of the Scriptures, as containing in them the Covenant of Grace in order to man's Salvation.

HAving thus largely proved the *Truth* of all those *paſſages* of *ſacred Scripture* which concern the hiſtory of the firſt *ages* of the *world*, by all those arguments which a ſubject of that nature is capable of, the only thing left in order to our full proving the *Divinity* of the *Scriptures*, is, the conſideration of those *matters* contained in it, which are in an eſpecial manner ſaid to be of *Divine Revelation*. For those hiſtorical *paſſages*, though we believe them as contained in the *Scripture*, to have been *Divinely inſpired* as well as others: yet they are ſuch things as ſuppoſing no *Divine Revelation*, might have been known ſufficiently to the world, had *Sect.* 1.

had not men been wanting to themſelves as to the care and means of preſerving them; but thoſe *matters* which I now come to diſcourſe of, are of a more *ſublime* and *tranſcendent* nature, ſuch as it had been impoſſible for the *minds* of *men* to reach, had they not been immediately diſcovered by *God* himſelf. And thoſe are the *terms* and *conditions* on which the Soul of man may upon good grounds expect an *eternal happineſs*, which we aſſert the *Book* of *Scriptures* to be the only *authentick* and *infallible records* of. Men might by the *improvements* of reaſon and the *ſagacity* of their minds diſcover much, not only of the *lapſed condition* of their *ſouls*, and the neceſſity of a *purgation* of them, in order to their *felicity*, but might in the general know what things are pleaſing and acceptable to the *Divine Nature*, from thoſe *differences* of *good* and *evil* which are unalterably fixed in the things themſelves; but which way to obtain any certainty of the *remiſſion* of *ſins*, to recover the *Grace* and *Favour* of *God*, to enjoy perfect *tranquillity* and *peace* of *conſcience*, to be able to pleaſe *God* in things agreeable to his Will, and by theſe to be aſſured of *eternal bliſs*, had been impoſſible for men to have ever found, had not *God* himſelf been graciouſly pleaſed to reveal them to us. Men might ſtill have bewildred themſelves in following the *ignes fatui* of their own *imaginations*, and hunting up and down the world for a path which leads to *Heaven*, but could have found none, unleſs *God* himſelf taking pity of the wandrings of men had been pleaſed to hang out a *light* from *Heaven* to direct them in their way thither, and by this *Pharos* of *Divine Revelation* to direct them ſo to *ſteer* their courſe, as to eſcape *ſplitting* themſelves on the *rocks* of open impieties, or being *ſwallowed* up in the *quick-ſands* of terrene delights. Neither doth he ſhew them only what *ſhelves* and *rocks* they muſt eſcape, but what particular *courſe* they muſt *ſteer*, what *ſtar* they muſt have in their *eye*, what *compaſs* they muſt obſerve, what *winds* and *gales* they muſt expect and pray for, if they would at laſt arrive at *eternal bliſs*. *Eternal bliſs!* What more could a *God* of infinite *goodneſs* promiſe, or the *ſoul* of *man* ever wiſh for? A *Reward* to ſuch who are ſo far from *deſerving*, that they are ſtill *provoking*; *Glory*

to

to such who are more apt to be *ashamed* of their duties, than of their offences; but that it should not only be a *glorious reward*, but *eternal* too, is that which though it infinitely *transcend* the *deserts* of the *receivers*, yet it highly discovers the *infinite goodness* of the *Giver*. But when we not only know that there is so rich a *mine* of inestimable *treasures*, but if the *owner* of it undertakes to shew us the way to it, and gives us certain and infallible directions how to come to the full *possession* of it, how much are we in *love* with *misery*, and do we *court* our own *ruin*, if we neglect to hearken to his *directions*, and *observe* his *commands*!

Sect. 2.

This is that we are now undertaking to make good concerning the *Scriptures*, that these alone contain those *sacred discoveries* by which the *souls* of men may come at last to enjoy a compleat and *eternal happiness*. One would think there could be nothing more needless in the world than to bid men regard their own *welfare*, and to *seek* to be *happy*; yet whoever casts his *eye* into the world, will find no counsel so little *hearkned* to as this, nor any thing which is more generally looked on as a matter *trivial* and *impertinent*. Which cannot arise but from one of these two *grounds*, that either they think it no great *wisdom* to let go their present hold as to the *good things* of this *world*, for that which they secretly question whether they shall ever *live* to *see* or no; or else that their *minds* are in *suspense*, whether they be not sent on a *Guiana voyage* to *Heaven*, whether the *certainty* of it be yet fully discovered, or the *instructions* which are given be such as may infallibly conduct them thither. The first, though it hath the *advantage* of *sense*, *fruition*, *delight*, and further *expectation*; yet to a *rational* person who seriously *reflects* on himself, and sums up what (after all his troubles and *disquietments* in the procuring, his *cares* in keeping, his *disappointments* in his *expectations*, his *fears* of losing *what* he doth enjoy, and that *vexation* of *spirit* which attends all these) he hath gained of true *contentment* to his mind, can never certainly believe that ever these *things* were intended for his *happiness*. For is it possible that the *soul* of man should ever enjoy its full and compleat *happiness* in this world, when nothing is able to make it *happy*, but what is

moſt *ſuitable* to its *nature*, able to fill up its large *capacity*, and *commenſurate* with its *duration*: but in this life the matter of mens greateſt *delights* is ſtrangely unſuitable to the nature of our *rational beings*, the *meaſure* of them too ſhort for our vaſt *deſires* to *ſtretch* themſelves upon; the *proportion* too *ſcant* and *narrow* to run *parallel* with *immortality*. It muſt be then only a *Supream*, *Infinite* and *Eternal Being*, which by the free *communications* of his *bounty* and *goodneſs* can fix and ſatiate the ſouls deſires, and by the conſtant flowings forth of his uninterrupted ſtreams of favour will always keep up deſire, and yet always ſatisfie it: One whoſe *goodneſs* can only be felt by ſome tranſient *touches* here, whoſe *love* can be ſeen but as through a *lattice*, whoſe conſtant preſence may be rather wiſhed for than enjoyed, who hath reſerved the full ſight and fruition of himſelf to that future *ſtate* when all theſe dark *veils* ſhall be done way, and the *ſoul* ſhall be continually *ſunning* her ſelf under immediate *beams* of *light* and *love*. But how or in what way the ſoul of *man* in this degenerate condition ſhould come to be partaker of ſo great a *happineſs*, by the enjoyment of that *God* our natures are now at ſuch a diſtance from, is the greateſt and moſt important enquiry of humane nature; and we continually ſee how ſucceſleſs and unſatisfactory the endeavours of thoſe have been to themſelves at laſt, who have ſought for this *happineſs* in a way of their own finding out; The large *volume* of the Creation, wherein *God* hath deſcribed ſo much of his *wiſdom* and *power*, is yet too dark and obſcure, too ſhort and imperfect to ſet forth to us the *way* which leads to eternal happineſs. Unleſs then the ſame *God* who made mens *ſouls* at firſt, do ſhew them the way for their recovery; as they are in a degenerate, ſo they will be in a deſperate *condition*; but the ſame *bounty* and *goodneſs* of *God*, which did at firſt diſplay it ſelf in giving being to mens *ſouls*, hath in a higher manner enlarged the diſcovery of it ſelf, by making known the *way* whereby we may be taken into his *Grace* and *Favour* again.

Which

Which it now concerns us particularly to discover, thereby to make it appear that this *way* is of that peculiar excellency, that we may have from thence the greatest evidence, it could come from no other Author but *God* himself and doth tend to no other *end* but our eternal *happiness*. Now that incomparable *excellency* which is in the *sacred Scriptures*, will fully appear, if we consider the *matters* contained in them under this threefold capacity. 1. As *matters of Divine Revelation.* 2. As *a rule of life.* 3. As containing *that Covenant of grace* which relates to mans *eternal happiness*.

1. Consider the Scripture generally, as containing in it *matters* of *divine revelation*, and therein the *excellency* of the *Scriptures* appears in two things. 1. *The matters which are revealed.* 2. *The manner wherein they are revealed.*

1. *The matters which are revealed* in Scripture, may be considered these three ways. 1. *As they are matters of the greatest weight and moment.* 2. *As matters of the greatest depth and mysteriousness.* 3. *As matters of the most universal satisfaction to the minds of men.*

1. *They are matters of the greatest moment and importance* for men to know. The *wisdom* of men is most known by the *weight* of the things they speak; and therefore that wherein the wisdom of *God* is discovered, cannot contain any thing that is mean and trivial; they must be matters of the highest *importance*, which the Supreme *Ruler* of the *world* vouchsafes to speak to men concerning: And such we shall find the matters which *God* hath revealed in his *word* to be, which either concern the rectifying our *apprehensions* of his nature, or making known to men their state and condition, or *discovering* the *way* whereby to avoid eternal misery. Now which is there of these three, which supposing *God* to discover his mind to the world, it doth not highly become him to speak to men of?

1. What is there which doth more highly concern men to know than *God* himself? or what more *glorious* and *excellent object* could he discover than *himself* to the world? There is nothing certainly which should more commend the *Sect.* 4.

Scriptures to us, than that thereby we may grow more acquainted with *God*; that we may know more of his *nature*, and all his *perfections*, and many of the great *reasons* of his actings in the world. We may by them understand with safety what the *eternal purposes* of *God* were as to the *way* of mans recovery by the *death* of his *Son*; we may there see and understand the great *wisdom* of *God*; not only in the *contrivance* of the *world*, and ordering of it, but in the gradual *revelations* of himself to his people, by what steps he trained up his *Church* till the *fullness of time was come*; what his *aim* was in laying such a *load* of *Ceremonies* on his people of the *Jews*; by what *steps* and *degrees* he made way for the full *revelation* of his *Will* to the World by speaking in these *last days* by his *Son*, after he had spoke *at sundry times and divers manners by the Prophets*, &c. *unto the Fathers*. In the *Scriptures* we read the most rich and admirable *discoveries* of *Divine goodness*, and all the ways and methods he useth in alluring sinners to himself, with what *Majesty* he *commands*, with what *condescention* he *intreats*, with what *importunity* he *wooes* men's souls to be reconciled to him, with what *favour* he *embraceth*, with what *tenderness* he *chastiseth*, with what *bowels* he *pitieth* those who have chosen him to be their *God*! With what *power* he *supporteth*, with what *wisdom* he *directeth*, with what *cordials* he *refresheth* the souls of such who are *dejected* under the *sense* of his displeasure, and yet their *love* is *sincere* towards him! With what profound *humility*, what holy *boldness*, what becoming *distance*, and yet what *restless importunity* do we therein find the *souls* of *God's* people addressing themselves to him in *prayer*! With what *cheerfulness* do they *serve* him, with what *confidence* do they *trust* him, with what *resolution* do they *adhere* to him in all *streights* and *difficulties*, with what patience do they submit to his *Will* in their greatest extremities! How *fearful* are they of *sinning* against *God*, how *careful* to please him, how *regardless* of *suffering*, when they must choose either that or *sinning*, how little *apprehensive* of mens *displeasure*, while they enjoy the favour of *God*! Now all these things which are so fully and pathetically expressed in *Scripture*, do abundantly set forth to us the

the *exuberancy* asd *Pleonasm* of *God's grace* and *goodness* towards his people, which makes them delight so much in him, and be so sensible of his displeasure. But above all other discoveries of *God's goodness*, his sending his *Son* into the *world* to die for *sinners*, is that which the *Scripture* sets forth with the greatest *Life* and *Eloquence*. By Eloquence, I mean not an artificial composure of words, but the *gravity*, *weight*, and *perswasiveness* of the matter contained in them. And what can tend more to melt our *frozen hearts* into a *current* of thankful obedience to God, than the vigorous *reflection* of the *beams* of *God's love* through *Jesus Christ* upon us! Was there ever so great an expression of *Love* heard of! nay, was it possible to be imagined, that that *God* who perfectly hates *sin*, should himself offer the *pardon* of it, and send his *Son* into the *world* to *secure* it to the sinner, who doth so heartily *repent* of his *sins*, as to deny himself, and take up his *cross* and *follow Christ*! Well might the Apostle say, *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation,* 1 Tim. 1. 15. *that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.* How dry and sapless are all the voluminous discourses of *Philosophers*, compared with this *Sentence*! How *jejune* and *unsatisfactory* are all the *discoveries* they had of *God* and his *goodness*, in comparison of what we have by the *Gospel* of *Christ*! Well might *Paul* then say, *That he determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified.* 1 Cor. 2. 2. *Christ crucified* is the *Library* which *triumphant souls* will be *studying* in to all *Eternity*. This is the only *Library* which is the true ἰατρεῖον ψυχῆς, that which *cures* the *soul* of all its *maladies* and *distempers*; other knowledge makes mens minds *giddy* and *flatulent*; this *settles* and *composes* them; other knowledge is apt to *swell* men into high *conceits* and *opinions* of themselves; this brings them to the truest *view* of themselves, and thereby to humility and sobriety; Other knowledge *leaves* mens hearts as it found them; this *alters* them and *makes* them better. So transcendent an *excellency* is there in the *knowledge* of *Christ crucified* above the sublimest speculations in the world.

And is not this an inestimable benefit we enjoy by the *Scripture*, that therein we can read and converse with all *Sect.* 5.

these

theſe expreſſions of *God's love and goodneſs*, and that in his own *language*? Shall we admire and praiſe what we meet with in *Heathen Philoſophers*, which is generous and handſome; and ſhall we not adore the infinite *fulneſs* of the *Scriptures*, which run over with continued *expreſſions* of that and a higher nature? What *folly* is it to magnifie thoſe *lean kine*, the notions of *Philoſophers*, and to contemn the *fat*, the *plenty* and *fulneſs* of the *Scriptures*? If there be not far more *valuable* and *excellent diſcoveries* of the *Divine Nature* and *Perfections*; if there be not far more excellent *directions* and *rules* of *practice* in the *ſacred Scriptures*, than in the *ſublimeſt* of all the *Philoſophers*, then let us leave our *full ears*, and feed upon the *thin*. But certainly no *ſober* and *rational ſpirit* that puts any value upon the *knowledge* of *God*, but on the ſame *account* that he doth prize the *diſcourſes* of any *Philoſophers* concerning *God*, he cannot but ſet a value of a far higher nature on the *word* of *God*. And as the *goodneſs* of *God* is thus diſcovered in *Scripture*, ſo is his *Juſtice* and *Holineſs*: we have therein recorded the moſt remarkable *judgments* of *God* upon contumacious ſinners, the ſevereſt *denunciations* of a *judgment* to *come* againſt all that live in ſin, the exacteſt *precepts* of *holineſs* in the world; and what can be deſired more to diſcover the *Holineſs* of *God*, than we find in *Scripture* concerning him? If therefore acquaintance with the *nature*, *perfections*, *deſigns* of ſo excellent a *Being* as God is, be a thing deſirable to humane nature, we have the greateſt cauſe to admire the *excellency* and *adore* the *fulneſs* of the *Scriptures* which give us ſo large, rational, and compleat account of the *Being* and *Attributes* of *God*. And which tends yet more to commend the *Scriptures* to us, thoſe things which the Scripture doth moſt fully diſcover concerning *God*, do not at all contradict thoſe *prime* and *common notions* which are in our *natures* concerning him, but do exceedingly advance and improve them, and tend the moſt to regulate our *conceptions* and *apprehenſions* of *God*, that we may not miſcarry therein, as otherwiſe men are apt to do. For it being natural to men ſo far to love *themſelves*, as to ſet the greateſt *value* upon thoſe *excellencies* which they think themſelves moſt maſters of: thence

thence men came to be exceedingly mistaken in their apprehensions of a *Deity*, some attributing *one* thing as a *perfection*, another a *different* thing, according to their *humours* and *inclinations*. Thus imperious self-willed men are apt to cry up *God's* absolute power and dominion as his greatest *perfection*; easie and soft-spirited men his *patience* and *goodness*; severe and rigid men his *justice* and *severity*: every one according to his *humour* and *temper*, making his *God* of his own *complexion*: and not only so, but in things remote enough from being *perfections* at all; yet because they are such things as they prize and value, they suppose of necessity they must be in *God*, as is evident in the *Epicureans* ἀπρονοησία, by which they excluded *providence*, as hath been already observed. And withall considering how very difficult it is for one who really believes that *God* is of a *pure, just, and holy nature*, and that he hath grievously offended him by his sins, to believe that this *God* will pardon him upon true *repentance*: It is thence necessary that *God* should make known himself to the world, to prevent our *misconceptions* of his nature, and to assure a *suspicious*, because *guilty creature*, how ready he is to pardon *iniquity*, *transgression*, and *sin*, to such as unfeignedly repent of their follies, and return unto himself. Though the light of *nature* may dictate much to us of the *benignity* and *goodness* of the *Divine Nature*, yet it is hard to conceive that that should discover further than *God's general goodness* to such as please him: but no foundation can be gathered thence of his *readiness* to pardon *offenders*, which being an act of *grace*, must alone be discovered by his *Will*. I cannot think the *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars* are such *itinerant Preachers*, as to unfold unto us the whole *Counsel* and *Will* of *God* in reference to man's acceptance with *God* upon *repentance*. It is not every *Star* in the *firmament* can do that which the *Star* once did to the *wise men*, lead them unto *Christ*. The *Sun* in the *Heavens* is no *Parelius* to the *Sun of righteousness*. The best *Astronomer* will never find the *day star from on high* in the rest of his number. What St. *Austin* said of *Tully's works*, is true of the whole *Volume* of the *Creation*, There are *admirable things* to be found in them: but the name of

Christ

Christ is not legible there. The *work* of *Redemption* is not engraven on the *works* of *providence*; if it had, a particular divine revelation had been unneceſſary, and the *Apoſtles* were ſent on a needleſs errand, which the world had underſtood without their *Preaching*, *viz. That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing to men their treſpaſſes, and hath committed to them the Miniſtry of Reconciliation*, How was the *word* of *reconciliation* committed to them, if it were common to them with the whole *frame* of the world? and the *Apoſtle's Quære* elſewhere might have been eaſily anſwered, *How can men hear without a Preacher?* For then they might have known the *way* of *ſalvation*, without any ſpecial *meſſengers* ſent to deliver it to them. I grant that *God's long-ſuffering* and *patience* is intended to *lead men to repentance*, and that ſome general *collections* might be made from providence of the *placability* of *God's nature*, and that *God never left himſelf without a witneſs of his goodneſs* in the world, being *kind to the unthankful, and doing good, in giving rain and fruitful ſeaſons.* But though theſe things might ſufficiently diſcover to ſuch who were apprehenſive of the *guilt* of ſin, that *God* did not act according to his greateſt *ſeverity*, and thereby did give men encouragement to hearken out and enquire after the true way of being reconciled to *God*; yet all this amounts not to a *firm foundation* for *faith* as to the *remiſſion* of *ſin*, which doth ſuppoſe *God* himſelf publiſhing an act of *grace* and *indempnity* to the world, wherein he aſſures the *pardon* of *ſin* to ſuch as truly *repent* and unfeignedly *believe* his *holy Goſpel*. Now is not this an ineſtimable advantage we enjoy by the *Scriptures*, that therein we underſtand what God himſelf hath diſcovered of his own *nature* and *perfections*, and of his readineſs to pardon *ſin* upon thoſe gracious *terms* of *Faith* and *Repentance*, and that which neceſſarily follows from theſe two, *hearty* and *ſincere obedience*?

2 Cor. 5. 18, 19.

Rom. 10. 14.

Act. 14. 14. Luk. 6. 35, 36.

Sect. 6

2. *The Scriptures give the moſt faithful repreſentation of the ſtate and condition of the ſoul of man.* The world was almoſt loſt in *Diſputes* concerning the *nature*, *condition*, and *immortality* of the ſoul before *divine revelation* was made known to mankind by the Goſpel of *Christ*; but *life* and *immortality was brought to light by the Goſpel*, and the future ſtate of

of the soul of man, not discovered in an uncertain *Platonical* way, but with the greatest light and evidence from that God who hath the supreme disposal of *souls*, and therefore best knows and understands them. The *Scriptures* plainly and fully reveal a *judgment to come*, in which *God will judge the secrets of all hearts*, when *every one must give an account of himself unto God*, and God will call men to give *an account of their stewardship* here, of all the *receipts* they have had from him, and the *expences* they have been at, and the *improvements* they have made of the *talents* he put into their hands. So that the *Gospel of Christ* is the fullest *instrument* of *discovery* of the certainty of the future *state* of the *soul*, and the conditions which abide it, upon its being dislodged from the body. But this is not all which the *Scripture* discovers as to the *state* of the *soul*; for it is not only a *prospective-glass*, reaching to its future *state*, but it is the most faithfull *looking-glass*, to discover all the *spots* and *deformities* of the *soul*: And not only shews *where they are*, but *whence they came*, what *their nature* is, and whither *they tend*. The true *Original* of all that *disorder* and *discomposure* which is in the *soul* of man, is only fully and satisfactorily given us in the *Word* of *God*, as hath been already proved. The *nature* and *working* of this *corruption* in man, had never been so clearly manifested, had not the *Law* and *Will* of *God* been discovered to the World; that is the *glass* whereby we see the secret *workings* of those *Bees* in our *hearts*, the *corruptions* of our *natures*; that sets forth the *folly* of our *imaginations*, the *unrulinesse* of our *passions*, the *distempers* of our *wills*, and the abundant *deceitfulness* of our *hearts*. And it is hard for the most *Elephantine sinner* (one of the greatest magnitude) so to trouble these *waters*, as not therein to discover the greatness of his own *deformities*. But that which tends most to awaken the *drowsie*, *senseless spirits* of men, the *Scripture* doth most fully describe the tendency of corruption, that the wages of *sin* is *death*, and the issue of continuance in sin will be the everlasting *misery* of the *soul*, in a perpetual *separation* from the *presence* of *God*, and undergoing the *lashes* and *severities* of *conscience* to all eternity. What a great discovery is this of the *faithfulness* of *God* to

the World, that he ſuffers not men to *undoe* themſelves without letting them know of it before-hand, that they might avoid it! *God* ſeeks not to *entrap* men's Souls, nor doth he rejoyce in the *miſery* and *ruine* of his *creatures*, but fully declares to them what the *conſequence* and *iſſue* of their ſinfull practices will be, aſſures them of a *judgment* to come, declares his own future *ſeverity* againſt contumacious ſinners, that they might not think themſelves *ſurprized*, and that if they had known there had been ſo great *danger* in *ſin*, they would never have been ſuch *fools*, as for the ſake of it to run into eternal miſery. Now *God*, to prevent this, with the greateſt *plainneſs* and *faithfulneſs* hath ſhewed men the *nature* and *danger* of all their *ſins*, and asks them beforehand what they will doe in the end thereof; whether they are able to bear his *wrath*, and *wreſtle* with *everlaſting burnings?* if not, he bids them *bethink* themſelves of what they have done already, and *repent*, and *amend* their *lives*, leſt *iniquity prove their ruine*, and *deſtruction overtake them, and that without remedy.* Now if men have *cauſe* to *prize* and *value* a faithfull *Monitor*, one that tenders their good, and would prevent their ruine, we have cauſe exceedingly to prize and value the *Scriptures*, which give us the trueſt repreſentation of the *ſtate* and *condition* of our *ſouls.*

3. *The Scripture diſcovers to us the only way of pleaſing God, and enjoying his favour.* That clearly reveals the *way* (which man might have ſought for to all eternity without particular revelation) whereby ſins may be pardoned, and whatever we doe may be *acceptable* unto *God.* It ſhews us that the ground of our acceptance with *God*, is through *Chriſt*, whom he hath made a *propitiation for the ſins of the world*, and who alone is the *true and living way*, whereby we may *draw near to God with a true heart, in full aſſurance of faith, having our hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience.* Through Chriſt we underſtand the *terms* on which *God* will ſhew *favour* and *grace* to the World, and by him we have ground of a παῤῥησία, *acceſs with freedom and boldneſs unto God.* On his account we may hope not only for *grace* to ſubdue our ſins, reſiſt temptations, conquer the devil and the world; but having *fought this good fight and finiſhed our courſe,*

by

by patient continuance in well-doing, we may justly *look for glory, honour, and immortality*, and that *crown of righteousness which is laid up for those who wait* in faith, holiness, and humility, *for the appearance of Christ from heaven.* Now what things can there be of greater *moment* and *importance* for men to *know*, or *God* to reveal, than the *nature* of *God*, and our *selves*, the *state* and *condition* of our *souls*, the only *way* to avoid *eternal misery*, and enjoy *everlasting bliss.*

Sect. 7. 2. The Scriptures discover not only *matters* of *importance*, but of the greatest *depth* and *mysteriousness.* There are many *wonderfull things in the Law of God*, things we may *admire*, but are never able to comprehend. Such are the *eternal purposes* and *decrees* of *God*, the *doctrine* of the *Trinity*, the *Incarnation* of the *Son of God*, and the *manner of the operation of the Spirit of God on the souls of men*, which are all things of great *weight* and *moment* for us to understand and believe that they are, and yet may be *unsearchable* to our *reason*, as to the particular manner of them. What certain ground our *faith* stands on as to these things hath been already shewed, and therefore I forbear insisting on them. Book 2. ch. 8. sect. 5, 6, 7.

3. The Scripture comprehends *matters* of the most *universal satisfaction* to the minds of men; though many things do much exceed our *apprehensions*, yet others are most suitable to the *dictates* of our *nature.* As *Origen* bid *Celsus* see, εἰ μὴ τὸ τῆς πίστεως ἡμῶν τοῖς κοιναῖς ἐννοίαις ἀρχῶθεν συναγορεύοντα, μᾶλλον τὰς εὐγνωμόνως ἀκούσας περὶ λογισμῶν, *whether it was not the agreeableness of the principles of faith with the common notions of humane nature, which prevailed most upon all candid and ingenuous auditors of them.* And therefore as *Socrates* said of *Heraclitus* his Books, What he understood was *excellent*, and therefore he supposed that which he did not understand was so too: so ought we to say of the *Scriptures*, If those things which are within our *capacity* be so suitable to our *natures* and *reasons*, those cannot *contradict* our *reason* which yet are above them. There are many *things* which the minds of men were sufficiently *assured* that they were, yet were to seek for *satisfaction* concerning them, which they could never have had without *Divine Revelation.* As C. Celf. lib. 3. p. 135.

the *nature* of *true happineſs*, wherein it lay, and how to be obtained, which the *Philoſophers* were ſo puzled with, the *Scripture* gives us full ſatisfaction concerning it. True *contentment* under the *troubles* of life, which the *Scripture* only acquaints us with the true grounds of; and all the *preſcriptions* of Heathen *Moraliſts* fall as much ſhort of, as the *directions* of an *Empirick* doth of a wiſe and skilfull *Phyſician*. *Avoiding the fears of death*, which can alone be through a grounded expectation of a future *ſtate* of *happineſs* which death leads men to, which cannot be had but through the right underſtanding of the *Word* of *God*. Thus we ſee the *excellency* of the *matters* themſelves contained in this *revelation* of the *mind* of *God* to the world.

Sect. 8. 2. As the *matters* themſelves are of an *excellent nature*, ſo is the manner wherein they are *revealed* in the *Scriptures*, and that,

1. *In a clear and perſpicuous manner*; not but there may be ſtill ſome paſſages which are hard to be underſtood, as being either *prophetical* or conſiſting of *ambiguous phraſes*, or containing *matters* above our *comprehenſion*; but all thoſe things which concern the *terms* of man's *ſalvation* are delivered with the greateſt evidence and perſpicuity. Who cannot underſtand what theſe things mean, *What doth the Lord require of thee, but to doe juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* that *without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God*; that *without holineſs none ſhall ſee the Lord*; that *unleſs we be born again, we can never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; theſe and ſuch like things are ſo *plain* and *clear*, that it is nothing but men's ſhutting their eyes againſt the *light* can keep them from underſtanding them; *God* intended theſe *things* as *directions* to men; and is not he able to ſpeak *intelligibly* when he pleaſe? he that made the *tongue*, ſhall he not *ſpeak* ſo as to be underſtood without an *infallible Interpreter?* eſpecially when it is his deſign to make known to men the *terms* of their *eternal happineſs*. Will *God* judge men at the great day for not believing thoſe *things* which they could not underſtand? *Strange*, that ever men ſhould judge the *Scriptures obſcure* in *matters neceſſary*, when the *Scripture* accounts it ſo great a *judgment* for men not to *underſtand* them.

If

If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them. Sure *Lot*'s door was *visible enough*, if it were a judgment for the men of *Sodom* not to see it; and the *Scriptures* then are *plain* and *intelligible* enough, if it be so great a *judgment* not to understand them. 2 Cor. 4. 3,4.

2. *In a powerfull and authoritative manner*; as the things contained in *Scripture* do not so much beg acceptance as command it; in that the *expressions* wherein our *duty* is concerned are such as *awe* men's *consciences* and pierce to their *hearts* and to their *secret thoughts*; *All things are open and naked before this Word of God; every secret of the mind and thought of the heart lies open to its stroke and force; it is quick and powerfull, sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joynts and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* The Word is a *Telescope* to discover the great *Luminaries* of the world, the Truths of highest concernment to the *souls* of *men*, and it is such a *Microscope* as discovers to us the smallest *Atom* of our *thoughts*, and discerns the most secret *intent* of the *heart*. And, as far as this *light* reacheth, it comes with *power* and *authority*, as it comes armed with the *Majesty* of that *God* who reveals it, whose authority extends over the *soul* and *conscience* of man in its most secret and hidden recesses. Heb. 4. 12,13.

3. *In a pure and unmixed manner*; in all other *writings* how good soever, we have a great *mixture* of *dross* and *gold* together; here is nothing but *pure gold*, *Diamonds* without *flaws*, *Suns* without *spots*. The most current *coins* of the world have their *alloyes* of baser *metals*, there is no such *mixture* in divine *Truths*; as they all come from the same Author, so they all have the same purity. There is a *Urim* and *Thummim* upon the whole *Scripture*, *light and perfection* in every part of it. In the *Philosophers* we may meet, it may be, with some scattered *fragments* of purer *metal*, amidst abundance of *dross* and *impure oar*; here we have whole *wedges of gold*, the same *vein* of *purity* and *holiness* running through the whole Book of Scriptures. Hence it is called the

form-

2 Tim. 1. 13. *form of ſound words*; here have been no *huckſters* to corrupt and mix their own *inventions* with *Divine Truths*.

Sect 9. 4. *In an uniform and agreeable manner.* This I grant is not ſufficient of it ſelf to prove the *Scriptures* to be *Divine*, becauſe all men do not contradict themſelves in their *writings*, but yet there are ſome peculiar *circumſtances* to be conſidered in the agreeableneſs of the *parts* of Scripture to each other which are not to be found in mere *humane writings*. 1. That this *doctrine was delivered by perſons who lived in different ages and times from each other.* Uſually one *age* corrects anothers *faults*, and we are apt to pity the *ignorance* of our *predeceſſors*, when it may be our *poſterity* may think us as ignorant as we doe them. But in the ſacred *Scripture* we read not one *age* condemning another; we find light ſtill increaſing in the ſeries of times in *Scripture*, but no *reflections* in any time upon the *ignorance*, or *weakneſs*, of the *precedent*; the dimmeſt *light* was ſufficient for its *age*, and was a ſtep to further diſcovery. *Quintilian* gives it as the reaſon of the great *uncertainty* of *Grammar* rules, *quia non analogia dimiſſa cælo formam loquendi dedit*; that which he wanted as to *Grammar*, we have as to *Divine Truths*; they are delivered from *heaven*, and therefore are always *uniform* and *agreeable* to each other.

Quintil. lib. 1. *cap.* 6.

2. *By perſons of different intereſts in the world.* God made choice of men of all ranks to be *Enditers* of his *Oracles*, to make it appear it was no matter of *State-policy* or particular *intereſt* which was contained in his *word*, which perſons of ſuch different intereſts, could not have agreed in as they do. We have *Moſes*, *David*, *Solomon*, perſons of royal *rank* and *quality*; and can it be any mean thing, which theſe think it their glory to be Penners of? We have *Iſaiah*, *Daniel*, and other perſons of the higheſt *education* and *accompliſhments*, and can it be any trivial thing which theſe imploy themſelves in? We have *Amos*, and other *Prophets* in the *Old Teſtament*, and the *Apoſtles* in the *New*, of the meaner ſort of men in the world, yet all theſe joyn in *conſort* together; when *God tunes* their *ſpirits*, all agree in the ſame *ſtrain* of *divine truths*, and give *light* and *harmony* to each other.

3. *By*

3. *By persons in different places and conditions*; some in *prosperity* in their own Countrey, some under banishment and adversity, yet all agreeing in the same *substance* of *doctrine*; of which no *alteration* we see was made either for the *flattery* of those in *power*, or for avoiding *miseries* and *calamities*. And under all the different *dispensations* before, under and after the *Law*, though the management of *things* was different, yet the doctrine and *design* was for substance the same in all. All the different *dispensations* agree in the same common *principles* of *religion*; the same *ground* of *acceptance* with *God*, and *obligation* to *duty* was common to all, though the peculiar instances wherein *God* was served might be different, according to the *ages* of growth in the *Church of God*. So that this great *uniformity* considered in these circumstances, is an argument that these things came orignally from the same *Spirit*, though conveyed through different *instruments* to the knowledge of the world.

5. *In a persuasive and convincing manner*: and that these ways. 1. *Bringing divine truths down to our capacity*, clothing spiritual matter in familiar expressions and similitudes, that so they might have the easier *admission* into our minds. 2. *Propounding things as our interest which are our duty*: thence *God*, so frequently in Scripture, recommends our *duties* to us under all those *motives* which are wont to have the greatest force on the minds of men; and annexeth gracious *promises* to our performance of them; and those of the most weighty and concerning things. *Of grace, favour, protection, deliverance, audience of prayers*, and *eternal happiness*, and if these will not prevail with men, what *motives* will? 3. *Courting us to obedience, when he might not only command us to obey, but punish presently for disobedience.* Hence are all those most *pathetical* and *affectionate strains* we read in *Scripture*. *O that there were such a heart within them, that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always, that it might go well with them, and with their children after them.* Deut. 5. 29. *Wo unto thee*, O Jerusalem, *wilt thou not be made clean?* Jer. 13. 27. *when shall it once be? Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways,* Ezek. 33. 11. *for why will ye die, O house of* Israel? *How shall I give thee up,* Ephraim? *how shall I deliver thee,* Israel? *how shall I make*

Hos. 11. 8.

make thee as Admah? *how ſhall I ſet thee as* Zeboim? *mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.*

Matt. 23. 37. O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, *how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not?* What *Majeſty*, and yet what *ſweetneſs* and *condeſcenſion* is there in theſe *expreſſions?* What *obſtinacy* and *rebellion* is it in men for them to ſtand out againſt *God*, when he thus comes down from his *throne* of *Majeſty* and *wooes* rebellious *ſinners* to return unto him that they may be *pardoned?* Such a matchleſs and unparallell'd ſtrain of *Rhetorick* is there in the *Scripture*, far above the *art* and *inſinuations* of the moſt admired *Orators*. Thus we ſee the peculiar excellency of the manner wherein the matters contained in *Scripture* are revealed to us: thus we have conſidered the *excellency* of the *Scripture*, as it is a *diſcovery* of *God's mind* to the world.

Sect. 10. 2. The *Scriptures* may be conſidered as a *rule of life*, or as a *Law of God* which is given for the *Government* of the *lives* of *men*, and therein the *excellency* of it lies in the nature of the *duties*, and the *encouragements* to the *practice* of them.

1. In the *nature* of the *duties* required, which are moſt *becoming God to require*, moſt reaſonable for us to perform.

1. *Moſt becoming God to require*, as they are moſt ſuitable and agreeable to the *Divine nature*, the *imitation* of which in our actions is the *ſubſtance* of our *Religion*. *Imitation* of him in his *goodneſs* and *holineſs*, by our conſtant endeavours of *mortifying ſin*, and *growing* in *grace* and *piety*. In his *grace* and *mercy*, by our *kindneſs* to all *men*, *forgiving* the *injuries* men doe unto us, *doing good to our greateſt enemies*. In his *juſtice* and *equity*, by *doing as we would be done by, and keeping a conſcience void of offence towards God and towards men*. The *firſt* takes in the *duties* of the *firſt*, the other the *duties* of the *ſecond Table*. *All acts of piety towards God*, are a part of *Juſtice*; for, as *Tully* ſaith, *Quid aliud eſt pietas, niſi juſtitia adverſus Deos?* and ſo *our loving God with our whole hearts, our entire and ſincere obedience to his will*, is a part of natural juſtice; for thereby we do but render unto *God* that which is his due from us as we are his *creatures*. We

ſee

ſee then the whole *duty* of man, *the fearing God and keeping his Commandments*, is as neceſſary a part of *Juſtice*, as the rendring to every man his own is.

2. They are moſt *reaſonable* for us to perform, in that, 1. *Religion* is not only a ſervice of the reaſonable *faculties* which are employed the moſt in it, the *commands* of the *Scripture* reaching the heart moſt, and the *ſervice* required being a *ſpiritual ſervice*, not lying in *meats* and *drinks*, or any *outward obſervations*, but in a ſanctified *temper* of *heart* and *mind*, which diſcovers it ſelf in the courſe of a *Chriſtian*'s life; but, 2. The *ſervice* it ſelf of *Religion* is *reaſonable*; the *commands* of the *Goſpel* are ſuch as no man's *reaſon* which conſiders them can doubt of the *excellency* of them. All *natural worſhip* is *founded* on the *dictates* of *nature*, all *inſtituted worſhip* on *God's revealed will*; and it is one of the prime *dictates* of nature, that God muſt be univerſally obeyed. Beſides, God requires nothing but what is apparently man's *intereſt* to doe; God prohibits nothing but what will *deſtroy* him if he doth it; ſo that the *commands* of the *Scriptures* are very *juſt* and *reaſonable*.

2. The *encouragements* are more than *proportionable* to the *difficulty* of *obedience*. *God's commands* are in themſelves eaſie, and moſt ſuitable to our *natures*. What more *rational* for a creature than to obey his *Maker*? all the *difficulty* of *religion* ariſeth from the *corruption of nature*. Now *God*, to encourage men to conquer the *difficulties* ariſing thence, hath propounded the ſtrongeſt *motives* and moſt prevailing *arguments* to obedience. Such are the *conſiderations* of *God's love* and *goodneſs* manifeſted to the world, by ſending his Son into it, to *die for ſinners*, and to give them an *example* which they are to follow, and by his readineſs through him to pardon *the ſins*, and accept the *perſons* of ſuch who *ſo receive him as to walk in him*; and by his promiſes of grace to *aſſiſt* them in the *wreſtling* with the *enemies* of their *ſalvation*. And to all theſe add that *glorious* and *unconceivable* reward which God hath promiſed to all thoſe who ſincerely obey him; and by theſe things we ſee how much the *encouragements* overweigh the *difficulties*, and that none can make the leaſt pretence that there is not motive ſufficient to down-weigh the

troubles which attend the exercise of *obedience* to the Will of God. So that we see what a peculiar *excellency* there is in the *Scriptures* as a *rule* of *life*, above all the Precepts of mere *Moralists*, the *foundation* of obedience being laid deeper in man's obligation to serve his Maker, the *practice* of obedience being carried higher in those most holy *precepts* which are in *Scripture*, the reward of obedience being *incomparably greater* than what men are able to conceive, much less to *promise* or *bestow*.

Sect. II. 3. The *Excellency* of the *Scriptures* appears, as they contain in them a *Covenant of Grace*, or the *transactions* between *God* and *Man*, in order to his *eternal happiness*. The more memorable any *transactions* are, the more *valuable* are any *authentick records* of them. The *Scriptures* contain in them the *Magna Charta* of *Heaven*, an *Act* of *pardon* with the *Royal assent* of *Heaven*, a *Proclamation* of *good-will* from God towards men; and can we then set too great a value on that which contains all the remarkable passages between *God* and the *souls* of men, in order to their *felicity*, from the beginning of the world? Can we think, since there is a *God* in the world of infinite *goodness*, that he should suffer all mankind to perish inevitably without his *propounding* any means for escaping of *eternal misery*? Is *God* so good to men as to this present *life*; and can we think if man's soul be immortal, as we have proved it is, that he should wholly neglect any offer of *good* to men as to their *eternal welfare*? Or is it possible to imagine that *man* should be happy in another world without *God*'s promising it, and prescribing conditions in order to it? If so, then this *happiness* is no free gift of *God*, unless he hath the *bestowing* and *promising* of it? and man is no *rational agent*, unless a *reward* suppose *conditions* to be *performed* in order to the obtaining it; or man may be bound to *conditions* which were never required him; or if they must be required, then there must be a *revelation* of *God*'s *will*, whereby he doth require them: And if so, then there are some *Records extant* of the transactions between *God* and *man*, in order to his *eternal happiness*: For what reason can we have to imagine that such *Records*, if once *extant*, should not continue still, especially since the same

goodness

goodness of God is engaged to preserve such *Records*, which at first did cause them to be indicted? Supposing then such Records extant somewhere in the world of these grand transactions between God and mens *souls*, our business is brought to a *period*; for what other *Records* are there in the world that can in the least *vye* with the *Scriptures*, as to the giving so just an *account* of all the *transactions* between God and men from the *foundation* of the *world*? Which gives us all the *steps*, *methods* and *ways* whereby *God* hath made known his *mind* and *will* to the world, in order to man's eternal *Salvation*. It remains only then that we *adore* and *magnifie* the *goodness* of God in making known his *Will* to us, and that we set a *value* and *esteem* on the *Scriptures*, as on the only *authentick Instruments* of that *Grand Charter* of *Peace*, which *God* hath revealed in order to man's *Eternal Happiness*.

FINIS.
